







S. T. Coleridge

1795.

FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING BY PETER VANDYKE, NOW IN THE NATIONAL
PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON.

SELECT POEMS
OF
SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

ARRANGED IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

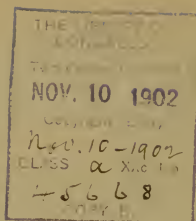
✓
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33 "The songs he gave us, what were they
But preludes to some loftier rhyme
That would not leave the sphered chime,
The concords of eternal day,
And speak itself in words of Time."

AUBREY DE VERE.

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UNITED STATES
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To
THE REV. H. D. RAWNSLEY
VICAR OF CROSTHWAITE AND HON. CANON OF
CARLISLE

WHO WITH THE IMAGINATION OF THE POET
AND THE FIDELITY OF THE CHRONICLER
HAS REVEALED IN NOBLE VERSE AND PROSE

THE LIFE OF THE PAST
WITH POETS AND DALESMEN
AT THE ENGLISH LAKES

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED
IN MEMORY OF WALKS AND TALKS

IN
THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW

Preface

IN 1892 Mr. Aubrey de Vere graciously allowed me to dedicate Wordsworth's *Prefaces on Poetry* to him as, "The friend of Wordsworth who had nobly illustrated in prose and verse the principles which these Prefaces Contain." He then wrote ; "It is indeed as the friend of Wordsworth and as one who from youth to age has endeavored to make known to others the transcendental value of his poetry that I should wish to be remembered if remembered at all." In the same letter, after alluding to my edition of *Select Poems* of Wordsworth, he said ; "I only wish that what you have done for Wordsworth you would next do for his brother Poet, Coleridge. Wordsworth expressed to me more than once his conviction that if Coleridge had kept to poetry after his twenty sixth year (when he deserted it) in place of taking to Metaphysics he would have been the chief poet of Modern Times."

In the years that have elapsed since this letter was written I have used the poems of Coleridge side by side with those of Wordsworth, with the purpose of ascertaining those best adapted to reveal not only the growth of his mind and art but also the experiences of his eventful life which give variety and charm to his work.

The present volume is the result of these observations, and it is believed that it will furnish the general student with sufficient material to enable him to understand and appreciate this great Poet and the time in which he lived. The special student will of course be satisfied with nothing less than the whole of the poet's work.

As respects a man whom we never saw we are fortunate if we have as means of knowing him, — works revealing the various moods of his mind and emotions of his heart, portraits painted by great artists in a lucky hour of his youth and age, and friends who had insight to know and were both able and willing to tell us the truth in regard to his character. In the study of Coleridge we have all of these means awaiting us, and there is no excuse for our taking half views of him and his work. Mr. Richard Garnett has said that in the study of Coleridge "The pebble of poetry is often the pearl of biography. His wood, hay, and stubble must consequently continue along with his fine gold; and by a curious paralogism, the only editions esteemed standard will be those where the abstract standard of excellence is disregarded." In this edition both pebbles and pearls will be found as its purpose is to reveal those influences in the life of the man which gave the distinctive note to his poetry. "The web of our life is a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues."

Inasmuch as the notes give the biographical and crit-

ical material sufficient to enable one to estimate the place in the history of literature which by common consent Coleridge occupies, I have attempted in the Introduction to reveal the larger influences of English life during the great revival in English poetry, Romantic and Revolutionary, of which Coleridge was so important a force.

Although most of the material of the notes has been gathered in my study and teaching of the poet, I am indebted for many important details to the valuable works of Mr. J. Dykes Campbell : *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* 1893, and *Samuel Taylor Coleridge A Narrative of the Events of his Life* 1894.

My thanks are due to The Rev. Canon Rawnsley for permission to associate his name with this volume.

The dates prefixed to the poems give the time of writing and of first publication respectively, so far as they can be ascertained. In some instances when it has been impossible to fix the exact date of composition I have conjectured the date from certain events in the poet's life, and I shall be glad if any readers of the volume can furnish corrections or elucidations.

A J. GEORGE.

Brookline, Massachusetts,

June, 1902.

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Introduction

A STUDY of the two great periods in the history of English literature, the Elizabethan, or the period of Italian influence, and the Modern, or that of the English Renaissance, will reveal the significant truth that the sources of creative power in each lay deep down in the national life. When the people have been stirred with emotion at the consciousness of unity in a great cause, patriotism has at once quickened the imagination, a Renaissance of wonder and delight springs up, and a new faith is born with a new art, as in the case of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton on the one hand, and Burns, Coleridge, and Wordsworth on the other.

When the springs of these mighty impulses became tainted or choked up as at the Restoration art and faith both languished ; but when after the lapse of nearly a century England arose to the consciousness of her history and her destiny in the great political revival under Pitt, they burst forth anew, and the art and faith of the Elizabethan under the Romantic impulse on the one hand and the Revolutionary outburst on the other were no longer satisfied with their insular position, and the era of expansion began. Britain suddenly rose from an era of the commonplace in men and affairs and towered above nations who were satisfied with merely a

continental influence. In this movement Pitt gained a position unique among English Statesmen.

In studying the predecessors of Coleridge it is necessary to review the beginning of these great impulses as they appear in the early and middle Eighteenth Century, and also follow them as they take up into themselves other elements of the life of the time as that life became more complex and expansive. The new movement toward nature, and the democratic movement belong to these two great impulses — Romantic and Revolutionary — which met in Wordsworth and Coleridge on the Quantock hills.

It was in the almost unconscious protest against the tendency of the Augustans to exclude the emotions from their subjects and freedom of movement from their verse that the Romantic movement had its rise. In contrast to the plastic power of the Classic imagination in molding subjects into graceful but colorless form, the Romantic was picturesque, figurative, scattering itself over its subject in a splendor of color and imagery. One is content with the world as it is here and now: the other is filled with an inexhaustible discontent, homesickness, and endless regret. Heine says that the Romantic movement in Germany was "the reawakening of the Poetry of Middle Age, as it had shown itself in its songs, images, and Architecture, in art and in life. But the poetry had risen from Christianity; it was a passion-flower which had sprung from the blood of Christ." This is equally true of the movement in England.

Predecessors of Coleridge struggled to bring back

into English life and literature something of the mirth and merrymaking, the enchantment of forest and stream, the spiritual glow and passion of love in hearts simple and pure, in forms of verse, where more is meant than meets the ear. Poetry, painting, music were to be reunited in the service of a simple natural life, breathing still the noble idealism, sense and soul of the middle ages which had appeared in Spenser and Milton. As no one of these revivalists was great enough to combine all of these characteristics they may be conveniently arranged in groups, as follows: (1) Those who, influenced by Spenser and Milton, excelled in reproducing the aspects of natural scenery and the moods of man; as Thomson, Collins, and Gray: (2) Those who were interested in the life and thought revealed in the ballads and the stories of a Romantic past, as James McPherson, Thomas Percy, and Thomas Chatterton.

In the closing years of the seventeenth century Addison had voiced the prevalent feeling of the Augustans as follows:

“ Old Spenser next, warm’d with poetic rage,
In ancient tales amused a barbarous age;
But now the mystic tale, that pleas’d of yore,
Can charm an understanding age no more.”

Before the middle of the eighteenth century there were those who became sated with the shrill wit of an understanding age, and sought again the mystic tale of Spenser. Chief among those who led the return from captivity was James Thomson. In his exquisite

Seasons he did splendid service in revealing the simplicity and truth of rural life and feeling.

“ At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
 Scarce staining ether ; but by fast degrees,
 In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
 Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep,
 Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom :
 Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
 Oppressing life ; but lovely, gentle, kind,
 And full of every hope and every joy,
 The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
 Into a perfect calm ; that not a breath
 Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
 Or rustling turn the many twinkling leaves
 Of aspen tall. The uncurling floods, diffused
 In glassy breath, seem through delusive lapse
 Forgetful of their course. ’T is silence all,
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
 Drop the dry sprig, and, mute-imploring, eye
 The fallen verdure. Hushed in short suspense,
 The plummy people streak their wings with oil,
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off ;
 And wait the approaching sign to strike, at once,
 Into the general choir.” ¹

He was not satisfied, however, until he had added to all this something of the romantic glow and splendor which exists for the inmost eye alone and constitutes the bliss of solitude. This he did in *The Castle of Indolence*. In luxury of bewitching sights and sounds it is unsurpassed even by Spenser himself —

“ Fancy’s pleasing son,
 Who, like a copious river, poured his song
 O’er all the mazes of enchanted ground.”

¹ *The Seasons*.

Loveliness with which to satiate one's senses, the ecstasy of romantic atmosphere, the triumph of imagination associative, are seen in the following painting worthy of Claude :

“ Was nought around but images of rest :
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between ;
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breathed, and beds of pleasant green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime, unnumbered glittering streamlets played,
And hurled everywhere their waters sheen ;
That, as they bickered through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.”¹

The revival of interest in the earlier mind and art of Milton which manifested itself at this time was revealed in its finest spirit in Collins and Gray. In their work imagination returns to the habit of spiritual and natural contemplation as opposed to the artificial moralizing of the Augustans, and its cry is “ Hence, vain deluding Joys ! ” as it welcomes the “ pensive Nun devout and pure ” to the studious cloisters pale, while sweet music breathes above, about, or underneath.

In Collins' *Ode to Evening* these effects are revealed with grace, vigor, and happy harmony. Mr. Swinburne says Corot on canvas might have signed this ode.

“ Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short, shrill shriek, flits by on leathern wing ;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

¹ *Castle of Indolence.*

Introduction

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum :
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May, not unseemly, with its stillness suit,
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return ! ”

His *Ode on the Death of Thomson* strikes the Elegiac note of Milton's *Lycidas* ; while that *On the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland* may be said to contain the whole Romantic School in its germ. The ninth stanza is typical of the entire poem.

“ Unbounded is thy rage ; with varied style
Thy muse may, like those feathery tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruin shows :
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wondering, from the hallowed ground !
Or thither, where, beneath the showery west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid ;
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade :
Yet frequent now, at midnight's solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreathed with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aerial council hold.”¹

It is in the work of Gray, the fastidious scholar and

¹ *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland.*

recluse, that we see the first culmination of the Romantic movement. There were three stages in the development of his taste. The first was that of the Augustans, as is seen by such conventional painting and cold morality the *Ode on the Spring* and *To Adversity*.

“ Where’er the oak’s thick branches stretch
 A broader browner shade,
 Where’er the rude and moss-grown beech
 O’er-canopies the glade,
 Beside some water’s rushy brink
 With me the Muse shall sit, and think
 (At ease reclined in rustic state)
 How vain the ardour of the crowd
 How low, how little are the proud,
 How indigent the great ! ”¹

The second stage is that of the *Elegy*, which is in the dreamy, pensive mood of Milton, and is permeated with the atmosphere of rural England.

“ Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
 And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
 Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
 And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
 The moping owl does to the moon complain
 Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
 Molest her ancient solitary reign. ”

The third stage is that of *The Bard*, *The Descent of Odin*, and the *Journal in the Lakes*, in which there is a glow of enthusiasm in the passion of man and the beauty of nature.

¹ *Ode on the Spring*.

“ On a rock whose haughty brow,
 Frowns o’er old Conway’s foaming flood,
 Robed in the sable garb of woe,
 With haggard eyes the Poet stood :
 (Loose his beard, and hoary hair
 Streamed, like a meteor, to the troubled air)
 And with a master’s hand, and Prophet’s fire
 Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre,
 Hark, how each giant oak, and desert cave,
 Sighs to the torrent’s awful voice beneath ! ” ¹

“ In the caverns of the West,
 By Odin’s fierce embrace comprest ;
 A wond’rous Boy shall Rinda bear,
 Who ne’er shall comb his raven hair,
 Nor wash his visage in the stream,
 Nor see the sun’s departing beam ;
 Till he on Hoder’s corse shall smile
 Flaming on the funeral pile,
 Now my weary lips I close :
 Leave me, leave me to repose.” ²

“ Came to the foot of Helvellyn along which runs an excellent road, looking down from a little height on Lee’s-water (called also Thirlmeer, or Wiborn-water), and soon descending on its margin. The lake from its depth looks black (though really as clear as glass), and from the gloom of the vast crags, that scowl over it: it is narrow and about three miles long, resembling a river in its course ; little shining torrents hurry down the rocks to join it, with not a bush to overshadow them, or cover their march: all is rock and loose stones up to the very brow, which lies so near your way,

¹ *The Bard.*

² *The Descent of Odin.*

that not above half the height of Helvellyn can be seen.”¹

The subtle analogy between human emotions and the phenomena of external nature ; the identification of our own moods with Nature and the spiritual elation resulting, is to be seen at its height in Wordsworth and Coleridge, but as early as 1739 Gray felt the influence. When visiting the Grande Chartreuse, he wrote to West : “I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation that there was no restraining ; not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief without the help of other argument.”

The years 1760-1770 are memorable ones in the history of English Romanticism, as at this time were given to the world Macpherson's *Ossian*, Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* and the *Rowley Poems* of Chatterton. Centuries ago among the mountains, lakes, and glens of the western Highlands of Scotland there existed a race of heroes known as the Fienne which Mr. Skene affirms preceded the Scots both in Erin and Alban. They came from Lochlan (Scandinavia) and settled in Ireland and the north of Scotland ; hence the legends of this race are the common property of both countries. Each has its own body of popular songs and epics of these Fenian heroes, preserved by oral tradition. Professor Shairp says that he has known of those among the Gael of the Scottish Highlands who could sing the Fenian poems for two

¹ *Journal in the Lakes.*

or three evenings continuously. The poetry of this period is known as Ossianic because Oisín was the proto bard, the first and greatest of the bards, and was the son of Fionn or Finn the great king. Having survived his race and kindred, alone and blind he stands at the door of his empty hall solacing himself with memories of the past. His chief delight is to listen to the song of Malvina, the betrothed of his son Oscar, who has fallen in battle. At times he himself breaks forth in a passionate wail of anguish, or a joyful hymn of victory, as he remembers the mighty deeds in which he has been an actor. He is a Gaelic Homer gathering the harvest of a splendid era of action.

In 1758 a young Highlander of Badenoch published a poem, *The Highlander*, which revealed an aspirant for literary honor not without promise. When it became known that he had in his possession some of the old poems of the Ossianic period he was urged to translate them. At first he hesitated, but later produced a translation of *Fingal* and *Temora* the ancient Epics. At once he was the observed of all observers and became in reputation what John Stuart Blackie calls the Pisis-tratus or the Aristarchus of a Celtic Homer. His fame was not only national but European. But at last doubts arose as to the existence of the originals, and the great Ossianic Controversy began. With it we have nothing to do now; the student who is curious about it will find abundant material in Shairp's *Aspects of Poetry*, Blackie's *Language and Literature of the Scottish Highlands*, and *The Publications of the Highlands Society*. In the earliest raptures of the Scottish Gael as

he prepared for the combat or returned victorious over his enemy ; in the later and more subdued note of love despair of the race as it fades away before the inevitable, we find a revelation of his varied interest and activity. In the following description of Cuchullin, the leader of the warriors of Ulster, we have the rapidity, the directness, the simplicity, and the nobility of Homer. I give Dr. Clerk's translation from Macpherson's prose :

“ In the chariot is seen the chief,
True, brave son of the keen-cutting brand,
Cuchullin, of blue dappled shields,
Son of Semo, renowned in song.
His cheek like the polished yew ;
Clear, far-ranging his eye,
Under arched, dark, and slender brow ;
His yellow hair down-streaming from his head,
Falls round the glorious face of man,
As he draws his spear from his back.”

A single quotation from the prose of Macpherson's *Fingal* will reveal his peculiar style, strong in exclamatory qualities, abruptness, picturesqueness, and solemnity, resembling that of the prophetic books of the English Bible : “ As the dark shades of autumn fly over the grass ; so glowing, dark, successive came the chiefs of Lochlin's echoing woods. Tall as the stag of Morven moved stately before them the King. His shining shield is on his side, like a flame on the heath at night ; when the world is silent and dark, and the traveler sees some ghost sporting in the beams. Dimly gleam the hills around, and show indistinctly their oaks. A

blast of the troubled ocean removed the settled mist. The sons of Erin appear, like a ridge of rock on the coast ; when mariners on shores unknown are trembling at the veering winds.”¹

“ The Celt’s quick feeling for what is noble and distinguished gave his poetry style ; his indomitable personality gave it pride and passion ; his sensibility and nervous exaltation gave it a better gift still, — the gift of rendering with wonderful felicity the magical charm of nature. Magic is just the word for it, — the magic of nature, her weird power and her fairy charm.”² This magic was just what sick poetry and over-civilization needed to revive their drooping spirits. “ Men had been talking under their breath, and in a mincing dialect, so long,” says Leslie Stephen, “ that they were easily gratified by vigorous and natural sentiment.” The charm of these tales of a past age was immediate. They touched Gray so keenly that he was impatient for more ; Chatterton imitated their style and subjects ; Walpole was charmed no less than Gray ; while Byron, Coleridge, and Scott felt their power. They were translated into six languages, and began a tour of Europe. The Celtic revival in Ireland is largely due to them, and the work of one of her greatest poets, Aubrey

¹ For revelations of Gaelic Life and Poetry the following works, recommended to me by Prof. John Blackie, will be found valuable: Mackenzie’s *Beauties of Gaelic Poetry* ; Donald Gregory, *History of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* ; Norman MacLeod, *Reminiscences of a Highland Parish* ; John Campbell, *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* ; *The Book of the Dean of Lismore* ; Mrs. Ogilvie, *Highland Minstrelsy*.

² Matthew Arnold, *Celtic Literature*.

de Vere, especially his *Legends of Ireland's Heroic Age*, which deals with so many of the mighty deeds of Cuchullain, should interest the student of literature.¹

While the learned were measuring weapons in the Ossianic Controversy a young prodigy, Thomas Chatterton, at Bristol was practicing a veritable hoax on a simple pewterer in his neighborhood. Having possessed himself of such necessary materials as ochre, pumice, bags of charcoal-dust, and parchments, he hid in the memorial room of the old church of Saint Mary de Redcliffe, and began copying old devices of heraldry and antique drawings. Having deceived the old guildsman, Bergum, with the newly discovered manuscript of his house, "The De Bergham Pedigree with crest and arms, two cat-a-mountains ermine," the creative impulse then took possession of him, and he added stories which purported to have been written by an old monk Rowley in the Middle Ages, and ventured to trap larger game. At the opening of the new bridge over the Avon at Bristol, he sent to the *Journal* a description of the Mayor passing over the old bridge in the reign of Henry II. In 1768 he prepared a prose sketch, *The Ryse of Peyncteynee in Englande, wroten by T. Rowleie 1469 for Master Canynge*. It is the story of Afflem, an Anglo Saxon worker in stained glass, who lived in the reign of Edmond, and was taken captive by the Danes. "Inkarde, a soldyer of the Danes, was to slea hym; onne the Nete before the Feeste of Deathe hee founde Afflem to bee hys Broder. Affreghte chaynede

¹ Cf. *Aubrey de Vere*, *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1902.

uppe hys soule. Gastnesse dwelled yn his Braste. Oscarre, the greate Dane gave hest hee shulde bee forslagene with the commeynge Sunne ; no tears colde availe ; the morne ; cladde yn roabes of ghastrness was come whan the Danique Kynge behested Oscarre to arraye hys Knyghtes eftsoones for Warre.” This deceived Horace Walpole, to whom it was sent. After writing many poems in the pseudo-antique style, as the result of a boyish freak he went to London as a literary adventurer. He lived on a crust because he was too proud to ask help, and died of starvation in his eighteenth year. After his death the Rowley poems were discovered, and they created almost as much interest as those of Macpherson. When they were published in 1777, they aroused controversy as to their authenticity ; and finally it was acknowledged by all that they were exceedingly clever forgeries, which revealed a genius of marvelous and fascinating character. Chatterton’s works carefully edited by the accomplished student of Chaucer, Prof. Skeat, may now be read with all their peculiar freshness and antique picturesqueness.

Song to Aella, Lord of Castle Bristol, is interesting.

“ O thou ! where’er — thy bones at rest, —
 Thy sprite to haunt delighteth best, —
 Whether upon the blood-embred plain,
 Or where thou kenst from far
 The dismal cry of war ;
 Or seest some mountain made of corse of slain
 Or in black armour stalk around
 Embattled Bristowe, once thy ground,
 And glow arduous on the Castle Stair ;
 Or fiery round the Minster glare,
 Let Bristowe still be made thy care.”

The *Ballad of Charity*, written when he was half starving, is perhaps the most complete and satisfactory of his works, of sustained power, tenderness, and beauty.

“ In Virgine the sultry Sun ’gan sheene
 And hot upon the meads did cast his ray :
 The apple ruddied from its paly green,
 And the soft pear did bend the leafy spray ;
 The pied chelandry¹ sang the livelong day :
 ’T was now the pride, the manhood of the year,
 And eke the ground was dight in its most deft aumere.¹

The sun was gleaming in the mid of day,
 Dead still the air and eke the welkin blue,
 When from the sea arist in drear array
 A heap of clouds of sable sullen hue,
 The which full fast unto the woodland drew,
 Hiding at once the Sunne’s festive face ;
 And the black tempest swelled and gathered up apace.

Beneath an holm, fast by a pathway side
 Which did unto Saint Godwin’s convent lead,
 A hapless pilgrim moaning did abide,
 Poor in his view, ungentle in his weed,
 Long breast-full of the miseries of need.
 Where from the hailstorm could the beggar fly ?
 He had no housen there, nor any convent nigh.”

The minstrel song from *Aella*, while suggested by Ophelia’s song in *Hamlet*, has charming touches peculiarly his own : —

“ Sweet his tongue as the throstle’s note,
 Quick in dance as thought can be,

¹ Goldfinch.

² Mantle.

Introduction

Deft his tabor, cudgel stout,
O he lies by the willow-tree !
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.

Hark ! the raven flaps his wing
In the briar's dell below ;
Hark ! the death-owl loud doth sing
To the nightmares as they go.
My love is dead,
Gone to his death-bed,
All under the willow-tree.''

The dramatic character of Chatterton's life, as well as the history and nature of his work, could not fail to influence the Romantic movement. His successors from Blake to Rossetti have acknowledged their inheritance from this fragile, sensitive soul, and have sung his praises. Mr. Edmund Gosse says : " It is not to be denied that, in relation of his years and equipments, to the vigour and bulk of his work produced, Chatterton is, let us say boldly, the most extraordinary phenomenon of infancy in the literature of the world."

It is interesting to note that while the Romantic movement in England grew to its majestic Gothic proportions at the close of the century without any assistance from abroad, England through Shakespeare was making her contribution to a similar movement in Germany, as that country was throwing off the influence of French Classicism. This was returned with interest through Goethe in 1796, to stimulate Sir Walter Scott in his earliest work, the translation of *Gotz von Berlichingen*, which, with Percy's *Reliques*, shares the

honor of creating his enthusiasm for the history of the legends and ballads of his own land.

In considering the second of great influences, the Revolutionary, which rises between the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789, we recognize how truly the eighteenth century was an age of prose and reason, for we see that no one of the poets already mentioned has any share in it. In 1788 Pitt, speaking in the House of Commons, said : “ Kings and Princes derive their power from the people ; and to the people alone, through the organ of their representatives, does it appertain to decide in cases for which the Constitution has made no specific or positive provision.”¹ And he alluded to the right of princes, other than as derived from the people, as already sunk into contempt and almost oblivion. He was the first Englishman of his time, for he made England the first country in the world. The Great Commoner might look down with scorn on coronets and garters. “ A great and celebrated name ; a name that keeps the name of this country respectable in every other on the globe. It may truly be called,

‘ clarum et venerabile nomen
Gentibus, et multum nostrae quod proderat urbi.’ ”²

The one man of the period whose political prose has risen to the height of great literature is Edmund Burke.

¹ *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George the Third.*

² Burke, *Speech on American Taxation.*

His matchless speeches on the American War and his Reflections on the French Revolution place him among the most noble-hearted statesmen and greatest political philosophers the world has ever known. His defense of the Americans and his condemnation of the French reveals that he saw clearly, as Mr. Morley says, why the draught which Rousseau and others brewed was harmless and wholesome for the Americans and maddening poison for the French.

While revolutionary in the nature of his political philosophy, Burke was anti-revolutionary as regards practical results, for abstract right is not always expedient. How imperial he was as an interpreter of English Liberty by his grasp of great principles, may be seen from the following. In his *Speech on Conciliation with America* he said : “ Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom ; and a great empire and little minds go ill together. If we are conscious of our situation, and glow with zeal to fill our place as becomes our station and ourselves, we ought to anticipate all our public proceedings on America with the old warning of the church, *Sursum corda* ! We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of the trust to which the order of Providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of this high calling, our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire ; and have made the most extensive and the only honorable conquests, not by destroying but by promoting the wealth, the number, the happiness of the human race. Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. English privileges have made it all

that it is ; English privileges alone will make it all it can be."

Alluding to the apparent inconsistency in Burke's attitude toward the French and American Revolution respectively Mr. Benjamin Kidd says : " We see Burke accordingly propounding the doctrine, already becoming strange to the theorists of the French Revolution, that even the whole people have no right to make a law prejudicial to the whole community. We are beginning to understand now something of the profound social instinct from which such illumination proceeds, as well as to perceive the character of the principle Burke had in sight which reconciles the apparent contradiction." ¹ In his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* he sought to lay bare the foundations on which political institutions must rest. " On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy (of the Revolutionists), which is the offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supplied only by their own terrors and by the concern which each individual may find in them from any private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of their academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections in the part of the Commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied, if I may use the expression in persons ; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But

¹ *Principles of Western Civilization*, chap. I.

that sort of reason which banishes the affection is incapable of filling the place.”

The new feeling for man which had been the cause of these great revolutions now revealed itself in the political, moral, and religious life of the time. Adam Smith showed that a nation's wealth was in the nature and conditions of its toilers. “In England the history of the great intellectual movement, in which the principles of modern democracy have been developed into something like the form in which they have come down to the current generation, may be said to have begun with Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.¹

The Wesleys awakened interest in the poor, and gave the first impulse to popular education. Reforms in the prison system were brought about by the humanitarian passion of Howard, and in every way Man, aside from considerations of wealth and position, was the centre of interest. In the new atmosphere of childlike wonder, practical wisdom, and philosophical thought, poetry of Man and Nature was developed. The poet who united the elements of the Romantic and Revolutionary impulses in the earlier stages is William Blake. His poetry has the elements of Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton, and anticipated Burns and Wordsworth, in the love of nature, animal life, and children.

In *Songs of Innocence*, simple, tender, joyous, laughing vale and echoing hill; pleasant cot, and innocent bower; oaken seat and neighbors all; merry bird and sportive lamb; are treated with a passion innocent and sublime. In *Songs of Experience* a child's

¹ Benjamin Kidd, *Principles of Western Civilization*, chap. 1.

heart beats in the man's, hating social injustice and all that renders the life of man slavish, mean, and vulgar. These are the prelusive notes to the symphony which is to be. *To the Muse* is a passionate appeal for a return of the old poetic power : —

“ How have you left the ancient love
That bards of old enjoyed in you !
The languid strings do scarcely move,
The sounds are forced, the notes are few.”

Blake's relation to the Revolutionary extremists is shown by such work as *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and *The French Revolution*, only the first book of which was published. It was the spiritual idea rather than the historical facts of the Revolution which appealed to him. In the little room over Johnson's book shop in Saint Paul's Churchyard he met with Godwin, Priestly, Fuseli, and Paine, and was the only one of the party who dared to wear the *bonnet rouge* on the street ; but when the September Massacres occurred he threw it aside in disgust, and returned to the calmer atmosphere of love and song : —

“ Memory hither come,
And tune your merry notes :
And while upon the wind
Your music floats,
I 'll pore upon the stream —
Where sighing lovers dream,
And fish for fancies as they pass
Within the watery glass.”

The three poets who were related to the Revolutionary movement in much the same way as were

Thomson, Collins, and Gray to the Romantic, were Crabbe, Cowper, and Burns. The note of the new Democracy had been sounded by Goldsmith when he brooded over the charm of those lovely bowers of innocence and ease, which luxuries' contagion had sickened o'er. In *The Village* of Crabbe we have a picture, not of the Arcadian simplicity of Sweet Auburn, but the sullen woe and bitter struggle in homes neither happy nor lovely, full of pain and misery. To sing of the idyllic pastoral life of Corydon and Phillis in the England of his time, he insisted, was only a delusion. Without flinching he disclosed the unpleasant truth that among the abject poor, —

“Where children dwell, who know no parents' care,
Parents who know no children's love,” —

there can be only despair in living. And thus he united his forces with those of Wesley, Howard, and Wilberforce in teaching, — what we have yet to learn, —

“How best to help the slender store,
How mend the dwellings of the poor ;
How gain in life, as life advances,
Valour and Charity more and more.”

One may call Crabbe narrow if one pleases, but the power of moving readers by actual grief and suffering no one will deny him. The following is his creed, —

“Cast by fortune on a frowning coast,
Which neither groves nor happy valleys boast ;
Where other cares than those the Muse relates,
And other shepherds dwell with other mates ;
By such examples taught, I paint the cot,
As truth will paint it and as bards will not :

Nor you, ye poor, of lettered scorn complain,
 To you the smoothest song is smooth in vain ;
 O'er-come by labor, and bowed down by time,
 Feel you the barren flattery of a rhyme ?
 Can poets soothe you when you pine for bread,
 By winding myrtles round your ruin'd shed ?
 Can their light tales your weighty griefs o'erpower ?
 Or glad with airy mirth the toilsome hour ?¹

In 1785 Cowper published *The Task*, and in 1786 Burns gave to the world the first edition of his poems. Each poet wrought his task unconscious of the existence of the other. The one in the dewy meadows of Buckinghamshire, and the other on the Ayrshire hills, saw Nature as she had not been seen since the time of Chaucer — in all her freshness and beauty ; and by so revealing it made poetry simple and natural, strong and healthful, with the health and the strength of youth. Cowper —

“ Loved the rural walk through lanes
 Of grassy swarth, close cropped by nibbling sheep,
 And skirted thick with intertexture firm
 Of thorny boughs . . .
 O'er hills, through valleys, and by river's brink.”

He loved to tend the hare which he had saved from the hunter, —

“ One sheltered hare
 Has never heard the sanguinary yell
 Of cruel man exulting in her woes.
 Yes — thou mayst eat thy bread, and lick the hand
 That feeds thee ; thou mayst frolic on the floor
 At evening, and at night retire secure
 To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarmed.”

¹ *The Village.*

Burns loved to wander —

“ Whyles owre the linn the burnie plays,
 As thro’ the glen it wimpl’t ;
 Whyles round a rocky scaur it strays,
 Whyles in a wiel it dimpl’t ;
 Whyles glitter’d to the nightly rays,
 Wi’ bickering, dancing dazzle ;
 Whyles cook’d underneath the braes,
 Below the spreading hazel,
 Unseen that night.”

In the winter night when the “ doors and whinnock ”
 rattle, he thought

“ On the ourie cattle
 Or silly sheep, wha bide the brattle
 O’ winter war,
 And thro the drift, deep-laiving, sprattle
 Beneath the scaur.”

Again, by revealing that the hearts as tender and true beat
 under the hodden gray as under royal robes, these
 singers made poetry democratic. Cowper wrote : —

“ He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
 He looks abroad into the varied field
 Of Nature, and though poor, perhaps, compared
 With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
 Calls the delightful scenery all his own.”

Burns voiced the same sentiment : —

“ Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
 ‘ An honest man is the noblest work of God,’
 And certes, in fair virtue’s heavenly road,
 The cottage leaves the palace far behind.”

And lastly, by teaching that God’s love was revealed
 in nature, in animal life, and in man, that, —

“God made all the creatures, and gave them our love and our fear,
To give sign we and they are his children, one family here,”

they made poetry reflect, as never before, the religion of Christ. The one indignantly protests : —

“My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which the earth is filled ;
Man devotes his brother and destroys.
And what man seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head to think himself a man ? ”

The other, with his sweet sympathy for his erring brother, says : —

“Who made the heart, 't is He alone
Decidedly can try us.
He knows each cord its various tone,
Each spring its various bias ;
Then at the balance let 's be mute,
We never can adjust it :
What 's *done* we partly may compute,
But know not what 's *resisted*.”

I have said that these poets never met, and that each lived and loved and sang almost unconscious of the existence of the other. It seems that Cowper read Burns in July, 1797, for he then wrote : “I think them on the whole a very extraordinary production. He is, I believe, the only poet these kingdoms have produced in the lower rank of life since Shakespeare who need not be indebted for any part of his praise to a charitable consideration of his origin, and the disadvan-

tages under which he has labored." How soon it was after the publication of Cowper's *Task* that it found Burns we cannot tell ; but in 1795 he wrote his friend, Mrs. Dunlop, as follows : —

"How do you like Cowper? Is not the *Task* a glorious poem? The religion of the *Task*, bating a few scraps of Calvinistic divinity, is the religion of God and nature ; the religion that exalts, that ennobles man."

The passion of these poets for Nature and Man resulted in their becoming the chief precursors of the Revolutionary movement. Cowper was an Evangelical and Whig. He was gentle and unaggressive, yet he was by no means effeminate. He was averse to all sudden transitions in church and state. He writes : "God grant that we may have no revolution here, but unless we have reform we certainly shall." But he felt that "Whenever the people chose to be masters they always are so, and none can hinder them." He hailed the hour when the Bastile should fall, with all the ardent desire of young Coleridge and Wordsworth.

"Ye horrid towers, the abode of broken hearts,
Ye dungeons, and ye cages of despair,
That monarchs have supplied from age to age,
With music such as suits their sovereign ears,
The sighs and groans of miserable men !
There 's not an English heart that would not leap
To hear that ye are fallen at last ; to know
That even our enemies so oft employed
In forging chains for us, themselves were free."

His conception of the power and duty of the poet

— a power prophetic and duty heroic — is that of all the great movement poets in our literature : —

“ A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart, he looks to distant storms,
He hears the thunder ere the tempest lower,
And, armed with strength surpassing human powers,
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.”

This may well stand as the inscription over the portals of our nineteenth century poetry, for by it we have come to judge poetic greatness in Cowper's successors. Senator Hoar says of one of these, Wordsworth, “ No man of his time, statesman, philosopher, or poet, saw with such unerring insight into the great moral forces which determine currents of history.”

Burns was even more national in his passion than Cowper, yet when acting as exciseman his sympathies with struggling France led him to send to her a caronade captured from a smuggler, with a letter of sympathy. For this he was reprimanded, and as he retained his office, he so feared that his friends might call him servile, that he wrote a letter to posterity in his own defense, saying, “ In the poet I have avowed manly and independent sentiments which I hope have been found in the man.” Again at a dinner, when Pitt's health was proposed, Burns rose and begged leave to drink to a greater and better man, — General Washington. In his patriotic chant, “ *Does haughty Gaul invasion threat,*” while declaring his loyalty to the party of order, he cannot forget that popular rights have claim to consideration, —

“ Who will not sing, ‘ God save the King,’
Shall hang as high ’s the steeple ;
But while we sing, ‘ God save the King,’
We ’ll ne’er forget the people.”

Having considered some of the phases of the Romantic and Revolutionary movements respectively until the time of Wordsworth and Coleridge, it will be the purpose of this volume to reveal the union of the two in the chartreuse of the Quantock hills, dedicated to the genius of Solitude. But we may anticipate the work of these two teachers in a general way by applying to them what Matthew Arnold says of Joubert, — they “ lived in the Philistines’ day, in a place and time when almost every idea current in literature had the mark of Dagon upon it, and not the mark of the children of light. Nay, the children of light were as yet hardly so much as heard of : the Canaanite was then in the land. Still, there were even then a few, who, nourished on some secret tradition, or illumined, perhaps, by divine inspiration, kept aloof from the reigning superstitions, never bowed the knee to the gods of Canaan.” ¹

¹ *Essays in Criticism*, First Series.

Appreciations

“Nothing can surpass the melodious richness of words which he heaps around his images, — images not glaring in themselves, but which are always affecting to the very verge of tears, because they have all been formed and nourished in the recesses of one of the most deeply musing spirits that ever breathed forth its inspirations in the majestic language of England.”

PROF. JOHN WILSON.

“Endowed with so glorious a gift of song, and only not fully master of his poetic means, because of the very versatility of his artistic power and the very variety and catholicity of his youthful sympathies, it is unhappily but too certain that the world has lost much by that perversity of conspiring accidents which so unhappily silenced Coleridge’s muse. And the loss is the more trying to posterity because he seems, to a not, I think, too curiously considering criticism, to have once actually struck that very chord which would have sounded most movingly beneath his touch.”

H. D. TRAILL.

“Coleridge’s poetical performance is like some exotic plant, just managing to blossom a little in the somewhat un-English air of his southwestern birthplace, but never quite well there. What shapes itself for criticism as the main phenomenon of Coleridge’s poetic life is not, as with most true poets, the gradual development of a poetic gift, determined, enriched, retarded, by the actual circumstances of the poet’s life, but the sudden blossoming, through one short season, of such a gift already perfect in its kind, which thereafter deteriorates as suddenly, with something like premature old age.”

WALTER PATER.

"One is a little apt to forget that Coleridge's metaphysical bent was no less innate than his poetical; even at Christ's Hospital his spiritual potation was a half-and-half, in which the waters of a more or less authentic Castaly, and the philosophic draughts from such fountains as Jamblichus and Plotinus, were equally mingled. Whether or not a born 'maker,' he was certainly a born theorist; and we believe not only that under all his most important artistic achievements there was a basis in intellectual theory, but that the theory, so far from being an alien and disturbing presence, did duty as the unifying principle which co-ordinated the whole."

WILLIAM WATSON.

"What Coleridge did well was unique, but it was very little; and the volume we have from him influences us with all the sadness that a garden does in which two or three beautiful flowers rise and flower perfectly, but in which the rest are choked with weeds and run to seed. And to those who can compare the things of art with the things of soul and heart, the analogy has its own profound moral lesson. . . . Surely few men have ever loved mankind more than this large-hearted creature of the sunny mist. And inasmuch as he loved much, his faults are forgiven."

STOFFORD A. BROOKE.

"The brilliant Coleridge of Nether Stowey, the buoyant young poet-philosopher who had not been to Germany, was a curious compound of imperfectly fused elements . . . but he was, above all, essentially and intrinsically a poet. The first genuine manifestations of his genius are the poems which he wrote before he was twenty-six. The germ of all Coleridge's utterances may be found — by a little ingenuity — in the *Ancient Mariner*."

LESLIE STEPHEN.

"A brief dawn of unsurpassed promise and achievement: 'a trouble' as of 'clouds and weeping rain'; then a long summer evening's work done by 'the setting sun's pathetic light' — such was Coleridge's day, the afterglow of which is still in the sky. I am sure that the temple, with all the rubble which blended with its marble, must have been a grander whole than any we are able to re-

construct for ourselves from the stones that lie about the field. The living Coleridge was ever his own apology — men and women who neither shared nor ignored his shortcomings, not only loved him, but honored and followed him. . . . Hatred as well as love may be blind, but friendship has eyes, and their testimony may wisely be used in correcting our own impressions.”

J. DYKES CAMPBELL.

“Coleridge certainly was a main influence in showing the English mind how it could emancipate itself from the vulgarizing tyranny of common sense, and teaches it to recognize in the imagination an important factor not only in the happiness but in the destiny of man. . . . I cannot think it a personal peculiarity, but a matter of universal experience, that more bits of Coleridge have introduced themselves in my memory than of any other poet who delighted my youth, unless I should except the sonnets of Shakespeare. This argues perfectness of expression.”

J. R. LOWELL.

“In one of his pieces of blank verse Coleridge has described a vision of the graceful, white-armed Isabel, reflected in the placid waters of a lonely stream ; but let a blossom of willow-herb or a foxglove bell be tossed upon the pool, and the charm is broken : —

‘ All that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other.’

The description might stand for that Coleridge’s own poetry personified, with its visionary beauty and its harmony of exquisite colors ; and what shall be said of the critic who flings his heavy stone of formula and scatters the loveliness ? ”

EDWARD DOWDEN.

“Of Coleridge’s best verses I venture to affirm that the world has nothing like them and can never have ; that they are of the highest kind and their own. An age that should neglect or forget Coleridge might neglect or forget any poet that ever lived. That may be said of him which can hardly be said of any but the

greatest among men, — that come what may to the world in course of time, it will never see his place filled."

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

"Coleridge was the spirit-quickener not only of this man or that, but of his whole age. The greatest men of his time were the most susceptible of his influence, and the first to feel it. His was the most germinative mind England has this century given birth to. Like a vast seed-field it lay, till the winds of inspiration wafted over it, blowing the seeds of his new thought over all the world."

J. C. SHAIRP.

"Coleridge's place in poetical literature was the incarnate transition, so to speak, from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, summing up in his own person in the restricted field of English poetry that description of spiritual evolution which Goethe has exhibited on a large scale in his symbolical representation of Faust's, and Helena's passage from classical into the mediæval age."

RICHARD GARNETT.

"His soul fared forth (as from the deep home-grove
The father-songster plies the hour-long quest),
To feed his soul-brood hungering in the nest;
But his warm Heart, the mother-bird, above
Their callow fledgling progeny still hove
With tented roof of wings and fostering breast
Till the Soul fed the soul-brood. Richly blest
From Heaven their growth, whose food was Human Love."

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

"O, for those Orphic songs unheard,
That lived but in the Singer's thought!
Who sinned? Whose hand frustration wrought?
Unworthy was the world or Bard
'To clasp those splendours, all but caught?'"

AUBREY DE VERE.

Select Poems of Coleridge

GENEVIEVE

1786-1794

MAID of my Love, sweet Genevieve !
In Beauty's light you glide along :
Your eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet your voice as seraph's song.
Yet not your heavenly beauty gives 5
This heart with passion soft to glow :
Within your soul a voice there lives !
It bids you hear the tale of woe.
When sinking low the sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretcht to save, 10
Fair, as the bosom of the swan
That rises graceful o'er the wave,
I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And *therefore* love I you, sweet Genevieve !

SONNET

TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON

1788-1796

MILD Splendour of the various-vested Night !
Mother of wildly-working visions ! hail !
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light

Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil ;
 And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud 5
 Behind the gathered blackness lost on high ;
 And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
 Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky.
 Ah such is Hope ! as changeful and as fair !
 Now dimly peering on the wistful sight ; 10
 Now hid behind the dragon-winged Despair ;
 But soon emerging in her radiant might
 She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
 Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.

TO THE MUSE

1789-1834

THO' no bold flights to thee belong ;
 And tho' thy lays with conscious fear,
 Shrink from Judgement's eye severe,
 Yet much I thank thee, Spirit of my song !
 For, lovely Muse ! thy sweet employ 5
 Exalts my soul, refines my breast,
 Gives each pure pleasure keener zest,
 And softens sorrow into pensive Joy.
 From thee I learn'd the wish to bless,
 From thee to commune with my heart ; 10
 From thee, dear Muse ! the gayer part,
 To laugh with pity at the crowds that press
 Where Fashion flaunts her robes by Folly spun,
 Whose hues gay-varying wanton in the sun.

DESTRUCTION OF THE BASTILE

1789 ?-1834

I

HEARD'ST thou yon universal cry,
And dost thou linger still on Gallia's shore?
Go, Tyranny! beneath some barbarous sky
Thy terrors lost and ruin'd power deplore!
What tho' through many a groaning age 5
Was felt thy keen suspicious rage,
Yet Freedom roused by fierce Disdain
Has wildly broke thy triple chain,
And like the storm which earth's deep entrails
hide,
At length has burst its way and spread the ruins 10
wide.

.

IV

In sighs their sickly breath was spent; each
gleam
Of Hope had ceased the long long day to
cheer;
Or if delusive, in some flitting dream,
It gave them to their friends and children
dear —
Awaked by lordly Insult's sound 15
To all the doubled horrors round,

Oft shrunk they from Oppression's band
 While anguish raised the desperate hand
 For silent death ; or lost the mind's controul,
 Thro' every burning vein would tides of Frenzy
 roll.

20

v

But cease, ye pitying bosoms, cease to bleed !
 Such scenes no more demand the tear humane ;
 I see, I see ! glad Liberty succeed
 With every patriot virtue in her train !
 And mark yon peasant's raptured eyes ; 25
 Secure he views his harvests rise ;
 No fetter vile the mind shall know,
 And Eloquence shall fearless glow.
 Yes ! Liberty the soul of Life shall reign,
 Shall throb in every pulse, shall flow thro' every
 vein ! 30

vi

Shall France alone a Despot spurn ?
 Shall she alone, O Freedom, boast thy care ?
 Lo, round thy standard Belgia's heroes burn,
 Tho' Power's blood-stain'd streamers fire the
 air,
 And wider yet thy influence spread, 35
 Nor e'er recline thy weary head,
 Till every land from pole to pole
 Shall boast one independent soul !

And still, as erst, let favour'd Britain be
First ever of the first and freest of the free ! 40

LIFE

1789-1834

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive plain
Where native Otter sports his scanty stream,
Musing in torpid woe a sister's pain,
The glorious prospect woke me from the
dream.

At every step it widen'd to my sight, 5
Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary
Steep.
Following in quick succession of delight,
Till all—at once—did my eye ravish'd
sweep !

May this (I cried) my course through Life
portray !
New scenes of wisdom may each step display, 10
And knowledge open as my days advance !
Till what time Death shall pour the undarken'd
ray,
My eye shall dart thro' infinite expanse,
And thought suspended lie in rapture's blissful
trance.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON

1790-1794

[First Version in Christ's Hospital Book — 1790]

Cold penury repress'd his noble rage,
And froze the genial current of his soul.

Now prompts the Muse poetic lays,
And high my bosom beats with love of
Praise!

But, Chatterton! methinks I hear thy name,
For cold my Fancy grows, and dead each Hope
of Fame.

When Want and cold Neglect had chill'd
thy soul, 5
Athirst for Death I see thee drench the bowl!
Thy corpse of many a livid hue
On the bare ground I view,
Whilst various passions all my mind engage;
Now is my breast distended with a sigh, 10
And now a flash of Rage
Darts through the tear, that glistens in my eye.

Is this the land of liberal Hearts!
Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
Pour'd forth her soul-enchancing strain? 15

Monody on the Death of Chatterton 7

Ah me! yet Butler 'gainst the bigot foe
Well-skill'd to aim keen Humour's dart,
Yet Butler felt Want's poignant sting;
And Otway, Master of the Tragic art,
Whom Pity's self had taught to sing, 20
Sank beneath a load of Woe;
This ever can the generous Briton hear,
And starts not in his eye th' indignant Tear?
Elate of Heart and confident of Fame,
From vales where Avon sports, the Minstrel
came, 25
Gay as the Poet hastes along
He meditates the future song,
How Ælla battled with his country's foes,
And whilst Fancy in the air
Paints him many a vision fair 30
His eyes dance rapture and his bosom glows.
With generous joy he views th' ideal gold:
He listens to many a Widow's prayers,
And many an Orphan's thanks he hears;
He soothes to peace the care-worn breast, 35
He bids the Debtor's eyes know rest,
And Liberty and Bliss behold:
And now he punishes the heart of steel,
And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel.

Fated to heave sad Disappointment's sigh, 40
To feel the Hope now rais'd, and now deprest,

To feel the burnings of an injur'd breast,
From all thy Fate's deep sorrow keen
In vain, O Youth, I turn th' affrighted eye ;
For powerful Fancy evernigh 45
The hateful picture forces on my sight.
There, Death of every dear delight,
Frowns Poverty of Giant mien !
In vain I seek the charms of youthful grace,
Thy sunken eye, thy haggard cheeks it shews, 50
The quick emotions struggling in the Face
Faint index of thy mental Throes,
When each strong Passion spurn'd controul,
And not a Friend was nigh to calm thy stormy soul.
Such was the sad and gloomy hour 55
When anguish'd care of sullen brow
Prepared the Poison's death-cold power.
Already to thy lips was rais'd the bowl,
When filial Pity stood thee by,
Thy fixed eyes she bade thee roll 60
On scenes that well might melt thy soul —
Thy native cot she held to view,
Thy native cot, where Peace ere long
Had listen'd to thy evening song ;
Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear, 65
And mark thy mother's thrilling tear,
She made thee feel her deep-drawn sigh,
And all her silent agony of Woe.
And from *thy* Fate shall such distress ensue ?

Monody on the Death of Chatterton 9

Ah ! dash the poison'd chalice from thy hand ! 70
And thou had'st dash'd it at her soft command ;
But that Despair and Indignation rose,
And told again the story of thy Woes,
Told the keen insult of th' unfeeling Heart,
The dread dependence on the low-born mind, 75
Told every Woe, for which thy breast might
smart,

Neglect and grinning scorn and Want combin'd —

Recoiling back, thou sent'st the friend of
Pain

To roll a tide of Death thro' every freezing vein.

O Spirit blest !

80

Whether th' eternal Throne around,

Amidst the blaze of Cherubim,

Thou pourest forth the grateful hymn,

Or, soaring through the blest Domain,

Enraptur'st Angels with thy strain, — 85

Grant me, like thee, the lyre to sound,

Like thee, with fire divine to glow —

But ah ! when rage the Waves of Woe,

Grant me with firmer breast t'oppose their
hate,

And soar beyond the storms with upright eye
elate !

90

ON RECEIVING AN ACCOUNT THAT
HIS ONLY SISTER'S DEATH WAS
INEVITABLE

1790-1834

THE tear which mourn'd a brother's fate scarce
dry —

Pain after pain, and woe succeeding woe —

Is my heart destined for another blow?

O my sweet sister! and must thou too die?

Ah! how has Disappointment pour'd the tear 5

O'er infant Hope destroy'd by early frost!

How are ye gone, whom most my soul held
dear!

Scarce had I loved you ere I mourn'd you lost;

Say, is this hollow eye, this heartless pain,

Fated to rove thro' Life's wide cheerless
plain — 10

Nor father, brother, sister meet its ken —

My woes, my joys unshared! Ah! long ere
then

On me thy icy dart, stern Death, be proved; —

Better to die, than live and not be loved!

THE RAVEN

A CHRISTMAS TALE, TOLD BY A SCHOOL-BOY
TO HIS LITTLE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1791?—1798

UNDERNEATH a huge oak tree
There was of swine a huge company,
That grunted as they crunched the mast :
For that was ripe, and fell full fast.
Then they trotted away, for the wind grew
high : 5
One acorn they left, and no more might you
spy.
Next came a Raven, that liked not such folly :
He belonged, they did say, to the witch Melan-
choly !
Blacker was he than blackest jet,
Flew low in the rain, and his feathers not wet. 10
He picked up the acorn and buried it straight
By the side of a river both deep and great.
Where then did the Raven go ?
He went high and low,
Over hill, over dale, did the black Raven go. 15
Many Autumns, many Springs
Travelled he with wandering wings :
Many Summers, many Winters —
I can't tell half his adventures.

At length he came back, and with him a She, 20
And the acorn was grown to a tall oak tree.

They built them a nest in the topmost bough,
And young ones they had, and were happy enow.
But soon came a woodman in leathern guise,
His brow, like a pent-house, hung over his eyes. 25
He'd an axe in his hand, not a word he spoke,
But with many a hem ! and a sturdy stroke,
At length he brought down the poor Raven's
own oak.

His young ones were killed ; for they could not
depart,
And their mother did die of a broken heart. 30

The boughs from the trunk the woodman did
sever ;

And they floated it down on the course of the
river.

They sawed it in planks, and its bark they did
strip,

And with this tree and others they made a good
ship.

The ship, it was launched ; but in sight of the
land 35

Such a storm there did rise as no ship could
withstand.

It bulged on a rock, and the waves rush'd in
fast :

The old Raven flew round and round, and
cawed to the blast.

He heard the last shriek of the perishing
souls —

See ! see ! o'er the topmast the mad water rolls ! 40

Right glad was the Raven, and off he went
fleet,

And Death riding home on a cloud he did meet,
And he thank'd him again and again for this
treat :

They had taken his all, and REVENGE WAS
SWEET !

[We must not think so ; but forget and for-
give, 45

And what Heaven gives life to, we'll still let
it live !]

SONNET

ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR COLLEGE

1791-1834

FAREWELL parental scenes ! a sad farewell !
To you my grateful heart still fondly clings,
Tho' fluttering round on Fancy's burnish'd wings
Her tales of future Joy Hope loves to tell.
Adieu, adieu ! ye much-loved cloisters pale ! 5
Ah ! would those happy days return again,

When 'neath your arches, free from every stain,
 I heard of guilt and wonder'd at the tale!
 Dear haunts! where oft my simple lays I sang,
 Listening meanwhile the echoings of my feet, 10
 Linger I quit you, with as great a pang,
 As when erewhile, my weeping childhood, torn
 By early sorrow from my native seat,
 Mingled its tears with hers — my widow'd
 Parent lorn.

ABSENCE

A FAREWELL ODE ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR
 JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

1791-1794

WHERE graced with many a classic spoil
 CAM rolls his reverend stream along,
 I haste to urge the learned toil
 That sternly chides my love-lorn song:
 Ah me! too mindful of the days 5
 Illumed by Passion's orient rays,
 When Peace, and Cheerfulness and Health
 Enriched me with the best of wealth.

Ah fair Delights! that o'er my soul
 On Memory's wing, like shadows fly! 10
 Ah Flowers! which Joy from Eden stole
 While Innocence stood smiling by! —

But cease, fond Heart ! this bootless moan :
 Those Hours on rapid Pinions flown
 Shall yet return, by Absence crowned, 15
 And scatter livelier roses round.

The Sun who ne'er remits his fires
 On heedless eyes may pour the day :
 The Moon, that oft from Heaven retires,
 Endears her renovated ray. 20
 What though she leave the sky unblest
 To mourn awhile in murky vest ?
 When she relumes her lovely light,
 We bless the Wanderer of the Night.

HAPPINESS

1791 ? - 1834

ON wide or narrow scale shall Man
 Most happily describe life's plan ?
 Say shall he bloom and wither there,
 Where first his infant buds appear ;
 Or upwards dart with soaring force, 5
 And tempt some more ambitious course ?
 Obedient now to Hope's command,
 I bid each humble wish expand,
 And fair and bright Life's prospects seem,
 While Hope displays her cheering beam, 10
 And Fancy's vivid colourings stream,

While Emulation stands me nigh
The Goddess of the eager eye.

With foot advanced and anxious heart
Now for the fancied goal I start : —
Ah ! why will Reason intervene
Me and my promised joys between !
She stops my course, she chains my speed,
While thus her forceful words proceed : —

‘ Ah ! listen, youth, ere yet too late,
What evils on thy course may wait !
To bow the head, to bend the knee,
A minion of Servility,
At low Pride’s frequent frowns to sigh,
And watch the glance in Folly’s eye ;
To toil intense, yet toil in vain,
And feel with what a hollow pain
Pale Disappointment hangs her head
O’er darling Expectation dead !

‘ The scene is changed and Fortune’s gale
Shall belly out each prosperous sail.
Yet sudden wealth full well I know
Did never happiness bestow.
That wealth to which we were not born
Dooms us to sorrow or to scorn.
Behold yon flock which long had trod
O’er the short grass of Devon’s sod,
To Lincoln’s rank rich meads transferr’d,
And in their fate thy own be fear’d ;

Through every limb contagions fly, 40
Deform'd and choked they burst and die.

‘ When Luxury opens wide her arms,
And smiling wooes thee to those charms,
Whose fascination thousands own,
Shall thy brows wear the stoic frown ? 45

And when her goblet she extends
Which maddening myriads press around,
What power divine thy soul befriends
That thou should'st dash it to the ground ? —
No, thou shalt drink, and thou shalt know 50

Her transient bliss, her lasting woe,
Her maniac joys, that know no measure,
And riot rude and painted pleasure ; —
Till (sad reverse !) the Enchantress vile
To frowns converts her magic smile ; 55

Her train impatient to destroy,
Observe her frown with gloomy joy ;
On thee with harpy fangs they seize
The hideous offspring of Disease, ·
Swoln Dropsy ignorant of Rest, 60

And Fever garb'd in scarlet vest,
Consumption driving the quick hearse,
And Gout that howls the frequent curse,
With Apoplex of heavy head
That surely aims his dart of lead. 65

‘ But say Life's joys unmix'd were given
To thee some favourite of Heaven :

Within, without, tho' all were health —
 Yet what e'en thus are Fame, Power, Wealth,
 But sounds that variously express, 70
 What's thine already — Happiness !
 'Tis thine the converse deep to hold
 With all the famous sons of old ;
 And thine the happy waking dream
 While Hope pursues some favourite theme, 75
 As oft when Night o'er Heaven is spread,
 Round this maternal seat you tread,
 Where far from splendour, far from riot,
 In silence wrapt sleeps careless quiet.
 'Tis thine with fancy oft to talk, 80
 And thine the peaceful evening walk ;
 And what to thee the sweetest are —
 The setting sun, the evening star —
 The tints, which live along the sky,
 And Moon that meets thy raptured eye, 85
 Where oft the tear shall grateful start,
 Dear silent pleasures of the Heart !
 Ah ! Being blest, for Heaven shall lend
 To share thy simple joys a friend !
 Ah ! doubly blest, if Love supply 90
 His influence to complete thy joy,
 If chance some lovely maid thou find
 To read thy visage in thy mind.

'One blessing more demands thy care : —
 Once more to Heaven address the prayer : 95

For humble independence pray
 The guardian genius of thy way ;
 Whom (sages say) in days of yore
 Meek Competence to Wisdom bore,
 So shall thy little vessel glide 100
 With a fair breeze adown the tide,
 And Hope, if e'er thou 'ginst to sorrow
 Remind thee of some fair to-morrow,
 Till Death shall close thy tranquil eye
 While Faith proclaims " thou shalt not die ! " "

A WISH

WRITTEN IN JESUS WOOD, FEB. 10, 1792

*[Sent, with the two pieces which follow, to Mary Evans,
 in a letter of that date.]*

Lo ! through the dusky silence of the groves,
 Thro' vales irriguous, and thro' green retreats,
 With languid murmur creeps the placid stream
 And works its secret way.

Awhile meand'ring round its native fields, 5
 It rolls the playful wave and winds its flight :
 Then downward flowing with awaken'd speed
 Embosoms in the Deep !

Thus thro' its silent tenor may my Life
 Smooth its meek stream by sordid wealth un-
 clogg'd, 10

Alike unconscious of forensic storms,
 And Glory's blood-stain'd palm !

And when dark Age shall close Life's little day,
 Sate of sport, and weary of its toils,
 E'en thus may slumbrous Death my decent limbs 15
 Compose with icy hand !

MS.

TO A YOUNG LADY

WITH A POEM ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1792-1796

MUCH on my early youth I love to dwell,
 Ere yet I bade that friendly dome farewell,
 Where first, beneath the echoing cloisters pale,
 I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale !
 Yet though the hours flew by on careless wing, 5
 Full heavily of Sorrow would I sing.
 Aye as the star of evening flung its beam
 In broken radiance on the wavy stream,
 My soul amid the pensive twilight gloom
 Mourned with the breeze, O Lee Boo ! o'er
 thy tomb. 10

Where'er I wandered, Pity still was near,
 Breathed from the heart and glistened in the tear :
 No knell that tolled but filled my anxious eye,
 And suffering Nature wept that *one* should die !

Thus to sad sympathies I soothed my breast, 15
 Calm, as the rainbow in the weeping West :
 When slumbering Freedom roused with high
 Disdain

With giant fury burst her triple chain !
 Fierce on her front the blasting Dog-star
 glowed ;

Her banners, like a midnight meteor, flowed ; 20
 Amid the yelling of the storm-rent skies !

She came, and scattered battles from her eyes !
 Then Exultation waked the patriot fire
 And swept with wilder hand the Alcæan lyre :
 Red from the Tyrant's wound I shook the lance, 25
 And strode in joy the reeking plains of France !

Fallen is the oppressor, friendless, ghastly, low,
 And my heart aches, though Mercy struck the
 blow.

With wearied thought once more I seek the
 shade,

Where peaceful Virtue weaves the Myrtle
 braid. 30

And O ! if Eyes whose holy glances roll,
 Swift messengers, and eloquent of soul ;
 If Smiles more winning, and a gentler Mien
 Than the love-wildered Maniac's brain hath seen
 Shaping celestial forms in vacant air, 35

If these demand the empassioned Poet's care—
 If Mirth and softened Sense and Wit refined,
 The blameless features of a lovely mind ;
 Then haply shall my trembling hand assign
 No fading wreath to Beauty's saintly shrine. 40
 Nor, Sara ! thou these early flowers refuse —
 Ne'er lurk'd the snake beneath their simple
 hues ;
 No purple bloom the Child of Nature brings
 From Flattery's night-shade : as he feels he
 sings.

SONGS OF THE PIXIES

1793-1796

THE Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation called the Pixies' Parlour. The roots of old trees form its ceiling ; and on its sides are innumerable cyphers, among which the author discovered his own cypher and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the Author, during the summer months of the year 1793, conducted a party of young ladies ; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colourless yet clear, was proclaimed the Faery Queen. On which occasion the following Irregular Ode was written.

I

WHOM the untaught Shepherds call
Pixies in their madrigal,
Fancy's children, here we dwell :
Welcome, Ladies ! to our cell.
Here the wren of softest note 5
Builds its nest and warbles well ;
Here the blackbird strains his throat ;
Welcome, Ladies ! to our cell.

II

When fades the moon all shadowy-pale,
And scuds the cloud before the gale, 10
Ere Morn with living gems bedight
Purples the East with streaky light,
We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dew
Clad in robes of rainbow hues ;
Or sport amid the rosy gleam 15
Soothed by the distant-tinkling team,
While lusty Labour scouting sorrow
Bids the Dame a glad good-morrow,
Who jogs the accustomed road along,
And paces cheery to her cheering song. 20

III

But not our filmy pinion
We scorch amid the blaze of day,
When Noontide's fiery-tressed minion,
Flashes the fervid ray.

Aye from the sultry heat 25
 We to the cave retreat
 O'er-canopied by huge roots intertwined
 With wildest texture, blackened o'er with age :
 Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
 Beneath whose foliage pale 30
 Fanned by the unfrequent gale
 We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV

Thither, while the murmuring throng
 Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
 By Indolence and Fancy brought, 35
 A youthful Bard, 'unknown to Fame,'
 Wooes the Queen of Solemn Thought,
 And heaves the gentle misery of a sigh
 Gazing with tearful eye,
 As round our sandy grot appear 40
 Many a rudely-sculptured name
 To pensive Memory dear !
 Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctured hue,
 We glance before his view :
 O'er his hush'd soul our soothing witcheries shed 45
 And twine our faery garlands round his head.

V

When Evening's dusky car
 Crowned with her dewy star

Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight ;
On leaves of aspen trees
We tremble to the breeze 50
Veiled from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
Along our wildly-bowered sequestered walk,
We listen to the enamoured rustic's talk ; 55
Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
Where young-eyed Loves have built their turtle
nest ;
Or guide of soul-subduing power
The electric flash, that from the melting eye
Darts the fond question and the soft reply. 60

VI

Or through the mystic ringlets of the vale
We flash our faery feet in gamesome prank ;
Or, silent-sandal'd, pay our defter court,
Circling the Spirit of the Western Gale,
Where wearied with his flower-caressing
sport, 65
Supine he slumbers on a violet bank ;
Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam
By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream ;
Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
Dash'd o'er the rocky channel froths along ; 70
Or where, his silver waters smoothed to rest,
The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII

Hence thou lingerer, Light !
 Eve saddens into Night.
 Mother of wildly-working dreams ! we view 75
 The sombre hours, that round thee stand
 With down-cast eyes (a duteous band !)
 Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
 Sorceress of the ebon throne !
 Thy power the Pixies own, 80
 When round thy raven brow
 Heaven's lucent roses glow,
 And clouds in watery colours drest
 Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest :
 What time the pale moon sheds a softer day 85
 Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam :
 For mid the quivering light 'tis ours to play,
 Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII

Welcome, Ladies ! to the cell
 Where the blameless Pixies dwell : 90
 But thou, Sweet Nymph ! proclaimed our
 Faery Queen,
 With what obeisance meet
 Thy presence shall we greet ?
 For lo ! attendant on thy steps are seen
 Graceful Ease in artless stole, 95
 And white-robed Purity of soul,

With Honour's softer mien ;
 Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,
 And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,
 Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view,
 As snow-drop wet with dew. 101

IX

Unboastful Maid! though now the Lily pale
 Transparent grace thy beauties meek;
 Yet ere again along the impurpling vale,
 The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove, 105
 Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
 We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek;
 And, haply, from the nectar-breathing Rose
 Extract a Blush for Love!

SONNET

TO THE RIVER OTTER

1793? - 1797

DEAR native Brook! wild Streamlet of the West!
 How many various-fated years have past,
 What happy and what mournful hours, since
 last
 I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy
 breast,
 Numbering its light leaps! yet so deep imprest 5
 Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine
 eyes

I never shut amid the sunny ray,
 But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
 Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows
 grey,
 And bedded sand that veined with various dyes 10
 Gleamed through thy bright transparence! On
 my way,
 Visions of Childhood! oft have ye beguiled
 Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest
 sighs:
 Ah! that once more I were a careless Child!

LINES

TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE

1793 ?-?

ONCE more, sweet Stream! with slow foot
 wandering near,
 I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
 Escape the flashing of the noontide hours,
 With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers
 (Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn) 5
 My languid hand shall wreath thy mossy urn.
 For not through pathless grove with murmur
 rude
 Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph, Solitude;
 Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
 The Hermit-fountain of some dripping cell! 10

Pride of the Vale ! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh.
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest, 15
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve with pensive look
Whistling lorn ditties leans upon his crook,
Or, starting, pauses with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-loved maid's accustomed
tread : 20

She, vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Loiters, the long-fill'd pitcher in her hand.

Unboastful Stream ! thy fount with pebbled falls
The faded form of past delight recalls,
What time the morning sun of Hope arose, 25
And all was joy ; save when another's woes
A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
Like passing clouds impictured on thy breast.
Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
Or silvery stole beneath the pensive Moon : 30
Ah ! now it works rude brakes and thorns
among,
Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along !

LINES

ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

1793-1796

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing! No
more

Those thin white flakes, those purple clouds
explore!

Nor there with happy spirits speed thy flight
Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of light;
Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends the day, 5
With western peasants hail the morning ray!

Ah! rather bid the perished pleasures move,
A shadowy train, across the soul of Love!
O'er Disappointment's wintry desert fling
Each flower that wreathed the dewy locks of
Spring, 10

When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's trim
bower

She leapt, awakened by the pattering shower.
Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper gleam,
Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's dream!
With faery wand O bid the Maid arise, 15
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes;
As erst when from the Muses' calm abode
I came, with Learning's meed not unbestowed;
When as she twined a laurel round my brow,
And met my kiss, and half returned my vow, 20

O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrilled heart,
And every nerve confessed the electric dart.

O dear Deceit ! I see the Maiden rise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes !
When first the lark high-soaring swells his
throat, 25

Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed lawn,
I mark her glancing mid the gleams of dawn.
When the bent flower beneath the night-dew
weeps

And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps, 30
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,
She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
With her along the streamlet's brink I rove ;
With her I list the warblings of the grove ;
And seems in each low wind her voice to float 35
Lone whispering Pity in each soothing note !

Spirits of Love ! ye heard her name ! Obey
The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.
Whether on clustering pinions ye are there,
Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle-trees, 40
Or with fond languishment around my fair
Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair ;
O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,
Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze !

Spirits ! to you the infant Maid was given 45
 Formed by the wondrous Alchemy of Heaven !
 No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire know,
 No fairer Maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.
 A thousand Loves around her forehead fly ;
 A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye ; 50
 Love lights her smile — in Joy's red nectar dips
 His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.
 She speaks ! and hark that passion-warbled
 song —
 Still, Fancy ! still that voice, those notes pro-
 long.
 As sweet as when that voice with rapturous falls 55
 Shall wake the softened echoes of Heaven's
 Halls !

O (have I sigh'd) were mine the wizard's rod,
 Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful God !
 A flower-entangled Arbour I would seem
 To shield my Love from Noontide's sultry
 beam : 60
 Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose odorous
 boughs
 My Love might weave gay garlands for her
 brows.
 When Twilight stole across the fading vale,
 To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale ;
 Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest, 65

And flutter my faint pinions on her breast !
On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,
To soothe my Love with shadows of delight : —

Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes ! 70

As when the Savage, who his drowsy frame
Had basked beneath the Sun's unclouded flame,
Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's
glare —

Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep, 75
And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep : —
So tossed by storms along Life's wildering way,
Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,
When by my native brook I wont to rove,
While Hope with kisses nursed the Infant
Love. 80

Dear native brook ! like Peace, so placidly
Smoothing through fertile fields thy current
meek !

Dear native brook ! where first young Poesy
Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream !
Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's
cheek, 85
As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream !

Dear native haunts ! where Virtue still is gay,
Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a mellowed
ray,

Where Love a crown of thornless Roses wears,
Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her tears ; 90
And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste employ,
Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy !

No more your sky-larks melting from the sight
Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with de-
light —

No more shall deck your pensive Pleasures
sweet

95

With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat.

Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied scene
Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook
between !

Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled song,
That soars on Morning's wing your vales
among.

100

Scenes of my Hope ! the aching eye ye leave
Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds of
eve !

Tearful and saddening with the saddened blaze
Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful gaze :
Sees shades on shades with deeper tint impend, 105
Till chill and damp the moonless night descend.

LEWTI

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT

1794-1798

AT midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight gleam 5
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half sheltered from my view
By pendent boughs of tressy yew. — 10
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair,
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue, 15
Onward to the moon it passed;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colours not a few,
Till it reach'd the moon at last:
Then the cloud was wholly bright, 20
With a rich and amber light!
And so with many a hope I seek

And with such joy I find my Lewti;
And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty! 25
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.
The little cloud — it floats away,
Away it goes; away so soon?
Alas! it has no power to stay: 30
Its hues are dim, its hues are grey —
Away it passes from the moon!
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky — 35
And now 'tis whiter than before!
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind — 40
And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud:
Perhaps the breezes that can fly 45
Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
Of Lady fair — that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished

From fruitless love too fondly cherished. 50
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind —
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever :
Like echoes to a distant thunder, 55
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune! 60
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies 65
When silent night has closed her eyes :
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head :
Voice of the Night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread, 70
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently-swelling wave. 75

Oh ! that she saw me in a dream,
 And dreamt that I had died for care ;
 All pale and wasted I would seem
 Yet fair withal, as spirits are !
 I'd die indeed, if I might see
 Her bosom heave, and heave for me !
 Soothe, gentle image ! soothe my mind !
 To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

80

THE FADED FLOWER

1794-1836

UNGRATEFUL he, who pluck'd thee from thy
 stalk,

Poor faded flow'ret ! on his careless way ;
 Inhal'd awhile thy odours on his walk,
 Then onward pass'd and left thee to decay.

Ah ! melancholy emblem ! had I seen
 Thy modest beauties dew'd with evening's gem,
 I had not rudely cropp'd thy parent stem,
 But left thee, blushing, 'mid the enliven'd green.

5

And now I bend me o'er thy wither'd bloom
 And drop the tear — as Fancy, at my side,
 Deep-sighing, points the fair frail Abra's tomb —
 ' Like thine, sad flower, was that poor wanderer's
 pride !

10

Oh ! lost to love and truth, whose selfish joy
 Tasted her vernal sweets, but tasted to destroy !'

DOMESTIC PEACE

[From 'The Fall of Robespierre,' Act I.]

1794-1794

TELL me, on what holy ground
 May Domestic Peace be found ?
 Halcyon daughter of the skies,
 Far on fearful wings she flies,
 From the pomp of Sceptered State, 5
 From the Rebel's noisy hate.
 In a cottaged vale She dwells
 Listening to the Sabbath bells!
 Still around her steps are seen
 Spotless Honour's meeker mien, 10
 Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
 Sorrow smiling through her tears,
 And conscious of the past employ
 Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

ON A DISCOVERY MADE TOO
 LATE

1794-1796

THOU bleedest, my poor Heart ! and thy distress
 Reasoning I ponder with a scornful smile
 And probe thy sore wound sternly, though the
 while
 Swoln be mine eye and dim with heaviness.

Why didst thou listen to Hope's whisper bland? 5
 Or, listening, why forget the healing tale,
 When Jealousy with feverish fancies pale
 Jarred thy fine fibres with a maniac's hand?
 Faint was that Hope, and rayless! — Yet 'twas
 fair

And soothed with many a dream the hour of rest: 10
 Thou should'st have loved it most, when most
 opprest,

And nursed it with an agony of care,
 Even as a mother her sweet infant heir
 That wan and sickly droops upon her breast!

LA FAYETTE

1794-1794,5

As when far off the warbled strains are heard
 That soar on Morning's wing the vales
 among;

Within his cage the imprisoned matin bird
 Swells the full chorus with a generous song:

He bathes no pinion in the dewy light, 5
 No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he shares,
 Yet still the rising radiance cheers his sight —
 His fellows' freedom soothes the captive's cares!

* * The above beautiful sonnet was written antecedently to the joyful account of the Patriot's escape from the Tyrant's Dungeon.
 [Note in *M. Ch.*] — December 15, 1794.

Thou, FAYETTE ! who didst wake with start-
ling voice

Life's better sun from that long wintry night, 10

Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt rejoice
And mock with raptures high the dungeon's
might :

For lo ! the morning struggles into day,
And Slavery's spectres shriek and vanish from
the ray !

TO A FRIEND

[CHARLES LAMB]

Together with an Unfinished Poem

1794-1795

THUS far my scanty pen hath built the rhyme
Elaborate and swelling : yet the heart
Not owns it. From thy spirit-breathing powers
I ask not now, my friend ! the aiding verse,
Tedious to thee, and from thy anxious thought 5
Of dissonant mood. In fancy (well I know)
From business wandering far and local cares,
Thou creepest round a dear-loved Sister's bed
With noiseless step, and watchest the faint look,
Soothing each pang with fond solicitude, 10
And tenderest tones medicinal of love.
I too a Sister had, an only Sister —

She loved me dearly, and I doted on her !
To her I pour'd forth all my puny sorrows,
(As sick Patient in his Nurse's arms) 15
And of the heart those hidden maladies
That even from Friendship's eye will shrink
ashamed.

O ! I have woke at midnight, and have wept,
Because she was not ! — Cheerily, dear Charles !
Thou thy best friend shalt cherish many a year : 20
Such warm presagings feel I of high Hope.
For not uninterested the dear Maid
I've view'd — her soul affectionate yet wise,
Her polish'd wit as mild as lambent glories
That play around a sainted infant's head. 25
He knows (the Spirit that in secret sees,
Of whose omniscient and all-spreading Love
Aught to *implore* were impotence of mind)
That my mute thoughts are sad before his
throne,
Prepared, when he his healing ray vouchsafes, 30
To pour forth thanksgiving with lifted heart,
And praise Him Gracious with a Brother's Joy !

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF
CHATTERTON

1794, 1829-1834

O WHAT a wonder seems the fear of death,
Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep,
Babes, Children, Youths, and Men,
Night following night for threescore years and
ten!

But doubly strange, where life is but a breath 5
To sigh and pant with, up Want's rugged steep.

Away, Grim Phantom! Scorpion King, away!
Reserve thy terrors and thy stings display
For coward Wealth and Guilt in robes of State!
Lo! by the grave I stand of one, for whom 10
A prodigal Nature and a niggard Doom
(*That* all bestowing, *this* withholding all)
Made each chance knell from distant spire or
dome

Sound like a seeking Mother's anxious call,
Return, poor Child! Home, weary truant, home! 15

Thee, Chatterton! these unblest stones protect
From want, and the bleak freezings of neglect.
Too long before the vexing Storm-blast driven
Here hast thou found repose! beneath this sod!

Thou! O vain word! *thou* dwell'st not with
the clod! 20

Amid the shining Host of the Forgiven
Thou at the throne of mercy and thy God
The triumph of redeeming Love dost hymn
(Believe it, O my Soul!) to harps of Seraphim.

Yet oft, perforce ('tis suffering Nature's call), 25
I weep that heaven-born Genius *so* shall fall;
And oft, in Fancy's saddest hour, my soul
Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
Now groans my sickening heart, as still I view
Thy corse of livid hue; 30
Now indignation checks the feeble sigh,
Or flashes through the tear that glistens in mine
eye!

Is this the land of song-ennobled line?
Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
Poured forth his lofty strain? 35
Ah me! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
Beneath chill Disappointment's shade,
His weary limbs in lonely anguish lay'd.
And o'er her darling dead
Pity hopeless hung her head, 40
While 'mid the pelting of that merciless
storm,'
Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form!

Monody on the Death of Chatterton 45

Sublime of thought, and confident of fame,
From vales where Avon winds the Minstrel
came.

Light-hearted youth! aye, as he hastes
along, 45

He meditates the future song,
How dauntless Ælla fray'd the Dacyan foe;
And while the numbers flowing strong
In eddies whirl, in surges throng,
Exulting in the spirits' genial throe 50
In tides of power his life-blood seems to flow.

And now his cheeks with deeper ardors flame,
His eyes have glorious meanings, that declare
More than the light of outward day shines there,
A holier triumph and a sterner aim! 55

Wings grow within him; and he soars above
Or Bard's or Minstrel's lay of war or love.
Friend to the friendless, to the sufferer health,
He hears the widow's prayer, the good man's
praise;

To scenes of bliss transmutes his fancied
wealth, 60

And young and old shall now see happy days.
On many a waste he bids trim gardens rise,
Gives the blue sky to many a prisoner's eyes;
And now in wrath he grasps the patriot steel,
And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel. 65

Sweet Flower of Hope! free Nature's genial
child!

That didst so fair disclose thy early bloom,
Filling the wide air with a rich perfume!
For thee in vain all heavenly aspects smil'd;
From the hard world brief respite could they
win —

70

The frost nipp'd sharp without, the canker
prey'd within!

Ah! where are fled the charms of vernal
Grace,

And Joy's wild gleams that lightened o'er thy
face?

Youth of tumultuous soul, and haggard eye!
Thy wasted form, thy hurried steps I view, 75
On thy wan forehead starts the lethal dew,
And oh! the anguish of that shuddering sigh!

Such were the struggles of the gloomy hour,
When Care, of withered brow,

Prepared the poison's death-cold power: 80

Already to thy lips was raised the bowl,
When near thee stood Affection meek
(Her bosom bare, and wildly pale her
cheek)

Thy sullen gaze she bade thee roll

On scenes that well might melt thy soul; 85

Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,

Thy native cot, where still, at close of day,
Peace smiling sate, and listened to thy lay;
Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear,
And mark thy mother's thrilling tear; 90
 See, see her breast's convulsive throe,
 Her silent agony of woe!
Ah! dash the poisoned chalice from thy hand!

And thou hadst dashed it, at her soft command,
But that Despair and Indignation rose, 95
And told again the story of thy woes;
Told the keen insult of the unfeeling heart,
The dread dependence on the low-born mind;
Told every pang, with which thy soul must
 smart,
Neglect, and grinning Scorn, and Want com-
 bined! 100
Recoiling quick, thou badest the friend of pain
Roll the black tide of Death through every
 freezing vein!

Ye woods! that wave o'er Avon's rocky steep,
To Fancy's ear sweet is your murmuring deep!
For here she loves the cypress wreath to
 weave; 105
Watching, with wistful eye, the saddening tints
 of eve.
Here, far from men, amid this pathless grove,

In solemn thought the Minstrel wont to rove,
Like star-beam on the slow sequestered tide
Lone-glittering, through the high tree branch-
ing wide.

And here, in Inspiration's eager hour,
When most the big soul feels the mastering
power,

These wilds, these caverns roaming o'er,
Round which the screaming sea-gulls soar,
With wild unequal steps he passed along, 115
Oft pouring on the winds a broken song :
Anon, upon some rough rock's fearful brow
Would pause abrupt — and gaze upon the
waves below.

Poor Chatterton ! *he* sorrows for thy fate
Who would have praised and loved thee, ere
too late.

Poor Chatterton ! farewell ! of darkest hues
This chaplet cast I on thy unshaped tomb ;
But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom :
For oh ! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing, ¹²⁵
Have blackened the fair promise of my spring ;
And the stern Fate transpierced with viewless
dart

The last pale Hope that shivered at my heart !

Monody on the Death of Chatterton 49

Hence, gloomy thoughts! no more my soul
shall dwell

On joys that were! no more endure to weigh 130
The shame and anguish of the evil day,
Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope I seek the cottaged dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray;
And, dancing to the moon-light roundelay, 135
The wizard Passions weave a holy spell!

O Chatterton! that thou wert yet alive!
Sure thou would'st spread the canvass to the gale,
And love with us the tinkling team to drive
O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale; 140
And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
Hanging, enraptured, on thy stately song,
And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy
All deftly masked as hoar Antiquity.

Alas, vain Phantasies! the fleeting brood 145
Of Woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood!
Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,
Where Susquehannah pours his untamed stream;
And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide, 150
Will raise a solemn Cenotaph to thee,
Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy!
And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE

1795 ?-1796

SISTER of love-lorn Poets, Philomel !
 How many Bards in city garret pent,
 While at their window they with downward eye
 Mark the faint lamp-beam on the kennell'd mud,
 And listen to the drowsy cry of Watchmen 5
 (Those hoarse unfeather'd Nightingales of
 Time !),
 How many wretched Bards address *thy* name,
 And hers, the full-orb'd Queen that shines
 above.
 But I *do* hear thee, and the high bough mark,
 Within whose mild moon-mellow'd foliage hid 10
 Thou warblest sad thy pity-pleading strains.
 O ! I have listen'd, till my working soul,
 Waked by those strains to thousand phantasies,
 Absorb'd hath ceased to listen ! Therefore oft,
 I hymn thy name : and with a proud delight 15
 Oft will I tell thee, Minstrel of the Moon !
 ' Most musical, most melancholy ' Bird !
 That all thy soft diversities of tone,
 Tho' sweeter far than the delicious airs
 That vibrate from a white-arm'd Lady's harp, 20
 What time the languishment of lonely love
 Melts in her eye, and heaves her breast of
 snow,

Are not so sweet as is the voice of her,
 My Sara — best beloved of human kind !
 When breathing the pure soul of tenderness 25
 She thrills me with the Husband's promised
 name !

LINES

COMPOSED WHILE CLIMBING THE LEFT ASCENT
 OF BROCKLEY COOMB, SOMERSETSHIRE, MAY
 1795

WITH many a pause and oft reverted eye
 I climb the Coomb's ascent : sweet songsters near
 Warble in shade their wild-wood melody :
 Far off the unvarying Cuckoo soothes my ear.
 Up scour the startling stragglers of the flock 5
 That on green plots o'er precipices browze :
 From the forced fissures of the naked rock
 The Yew-tree bursts ! Beneath its dark green
 boughs
 (Mid which the May-thorn blends its blossoms
 white)
 Where broad smooth stones jut out in mossy
 seats, 10
 I rest : — and now have gained the topmost site.
 Ah ! what a luxury of landscape meets
 My gaze ! Proud towers, and cots more dear
 to me,

Elm-shadow'd fields, and prospect-bounding
sea!

Deep sighs my lonely heart : I drop the tear : 15
Enchanting spot ! O were my Sara here !

THE EOLIAN HARP

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE

1795-1796

My pensive Sara ! thy soft cheek reclined
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
With white-flowered Jasmin, and the broad-
leaved Myrtle,
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love !), 5
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with
light,
Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite ! How exquisite the scents
Snatched from yon bean-field ! and the world
so hushed ! 10
The stilly murmur of the distant sea
Tells us of silence.

And that simplest lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement,
hark !
How by the desultory breeze caressed,

Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover, 15
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, its
strings

Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound 20
As twilight Elfin's make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-Land,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed
wing! 25

O! the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every
where —

Methinks, it should have been impossible 30
Not to love all things in a world so filled;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon, 35
Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the
main,

And tranquil muse upon tranquillity ;
Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
And many idle flitting phantasies, 40
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute !

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed, 45
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of all ?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman ! nor such thoughts 50
Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ !
Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
These shapings of the unregenerate mind ; 55
Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of him,
The Incomprehensible ! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels ; 60
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, dear honoured Maid !

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT
A PLACE OF RETIREMENT

Sermoni propria. — HOR.

1795-1796

Low was our pretty Cot : our tallest rose
Peeped at the chamber-window. We could
hear

At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
Our myrtles blossom'd ; and across the porch 5
Thick jasmins twined : the little landscape
round

Was green and woody, and refreshed the eye.
It was a spot which you might aptly call
The Valley of Seclusion ! Once I saw
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness) 10
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristowa's citizen : methought, it calmed
His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
With wiser feelings : for he paused, and looked
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around, 15
Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round again.
And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed Place.
And we *were* blessed. Oft with patient ear
Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen 20
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered tones

Seemed imaged in its vast circumference : 40
 No *wish* profaned my overwhelmed heart.
 Blest hour ! It was a luxury, — to be !

Ah ! quiet dell ! dear cot, and mount sublime !
 I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
 While my unnumbered brethren toiled and
 bled, 45

That I should dream away the entrusted hours
 On rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart
 With feelings all too delicate for use ?
 Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
 Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth : 50

And he that works me good with unmoved face,
 Does it but half : he chills me while he aids,
 My benefactor, not my brother man !

Yet even this, this cold beneficence
 Praise, praise it, O my Soul ! oft as thou
 scann'st 55

The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe !
 Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the
 wretched,

Nursing in some delicious solitude
 Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies !
 I therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand, 60
 Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
 Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.
 Yet oft when after honourable toil

Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to
dream,

My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot ! 65

Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,

And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.

And I shall sigh fond wishes — sweet abode !

Ah ! — had none greater ! And that all had
such !

It might be so — but the time is not yet. 70

Speed it, O Father ! Let thy Kingdom come !

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY 1796

1796

SWEET flower ! that peeping from thy russet
stem

Unfoldest timidly, (for in strange sort

This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chatter-
ing month

Hath borrow'd Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon
thee

With blue voluptuous eye) alas, poor Flower ! 5

These are but flatteries of the faithless year.

Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,

Even now the keen North-East is on its way.

Flower that must perish ! shall I liken thee

To some sweet girl of too too rapid growth 10

Nipp'd by consumption mid untimely charms?
Or to Bristowa's bard, the wondrous boy!
An amaranth, which earth scarce seem'd to own,
Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
Beat it to earth? or with indignant grief 15
Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
Bright flower of hope killed in the opening bud?
Farewell, sweet blossom! better fate be thine
And mock my boding! Dim similitudes
Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour 20
From anxious Self, Life's cruel task-master!
And the warm wooings of this sunny day
Tremble along my frame and harmonize
The attempered organ, that even saddest
thoughts
Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh
tones 25
Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

TO —

1796?—1836

I mix in life, and labour to seem free,
With common persons pleased and common
things,
While every thought and action tends to thee,
And every impulse from thy influence
springs.

TO A PRIMROSE

THE FIRST SEEN IN THE SEASON

1796-1796

Nitens et roboris expers

Turget et insolida est : et spe delectat.

OVID, *Metam.*

Thy smiles I note, sweet early flower,
 That peeping from thy rustic bower
 The festive news to earth dost bring,
 A fragrant messenger of spring.

But, tender blossom, why so pale? 5
 Dost hear stern winter in the gale?
 And didst thou tempt the ungentle sky
 To catch one vernal glance and die?

Such the wan lustre sickness wears
 When health's first feeble beam appears; 10
 So languid are the smiles that seek
 To settle on the care-worn cheek

When timorous hope the head uprears,
 Still drooping and still moist with tears,
 If, through dispersing grief, be seen 15
 Of bliss the heavenly spark serene.

And sweeter far the early blow,
 Fast following after storms of woe,
 Than (comfort's riper season come)
 Are full-blown joys and pleasure's gaudy bloom. 20

SONNET

TO A FRIEND WHO ASKED, HOW I FELT WHEN
 THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED MY INFANT
 TO ME

1796-1797

CHARLES! my slow heart was only sad, when
 first

I scanned that face of feeble infancy:
 For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
 All I had been, and all my child might be!
 But when I saw it on its mother's arm, 5
 And hanging at her bosom (she the while
 Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile)
 Then I was thrilled and melted, and most
 warm

Impressed a father's kiss: and all beguiled
 Of dark remembrance and presageful fear, 10
 I seemed to see an angel-form appear —
 'Twas even thine, beloved woman mild!
 So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
 And dearer was the mother for the child.

LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-
ROOM

1796-1799

O GIVE me, from this heartless scene released,
To hear our old musician, blind and grey,
(Whom stretching from my nurse's arms I
kissed,)

His Scottish tunes and warlike marches play,
By moonshine, on the balmy summer-night, 5
The while I dance amid the tedded hay
With merry maids, whose ringlets toss in light.

Or lies the purple evening on the bay
Of the calm glossy lake, O let me hide
Unheard, unseen, behind the alder-trees, 10
For round their roots the fisher's boat is tied,
On whose trim seat doth Edmund stretch at
ease,
And while the lazy boat sways to and fro,
Breathes in his flute sad airs, so wild and
slow,
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears. 15

But O, dear Anne! when midnight wind ca-
reers,
And the gust pelting on the out-house shed

Makes the cock shrilly in the rain-storm
crow,

To hear thee sing some ballad full of woe,
Ballad of ship-wreck'd sailor floating dead, 20
Whom his own true-love buried in the
sands !

Thee, gentle woman, for thy voice remeasures
Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures

The things of Nature utter ; birds or trees,
Or moan of ocean-gale in weedy caves, 25
Or where the stiff grass mid the heath-plant
waves,

Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze.

ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR

1796-1796

Ἰὸν ἰὸν, ὦ ὦ κακά.
'Υπ' αὖ με δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
Στροβεῖ, ταρασσὼν φροιμίῳις ἐφημίῳις.

Τὸ μέλλον ἤξει. Καὶ σύ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν
Ἄγαν ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτεῖρας ἐρεῖς.

ÆSCHYL. *Agam.* 1215-18; 1240-41.

ARGUMENT

THE Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in

general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the Image of the Departing Year, etc., as in a vision. The second Epode prophesies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

I

SPIRIT who sweepst the wild Harp of Time!

It is most hard, with an untroubled ear

Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear!

Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's unchanging
clime

Long had I listened, free from mortal fear, 5

With inward stillness, and submitted mind;

When lo! its folds far waving on the wind,

I saw the train of the Departing Year!

Starting from my silent sadness

Then with no unholy madness 10

Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,

I raised the impetuous song, and solemnized
his flight.

II

Hither, from the recent tomb,

From the prison's direr gloom,

From distemper's midnight anguish; 15

And thence, where poverty doth waste and
 languish;
Or where, his two bright torches blending,
 Love illumines Manhood's maze;
Or where o'er cradled infants blending,
 Hope has fixed her wishful gaze; 20
 Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye woes! ye young-eyed Joys! advance!
By time's wild harp, and by the hand
 Whose indefatigable sweep
 Raises its fateful strings from sleep, 25
I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band!
 From every private bower,
 And each domestic hearth,
 Haste for one solemn hour;
And with a loud and yet a louder voice, 30
O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
 Weep and rejoice!
Still echoes the dread Name that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of
 Hell:
And now advance in saintly Jubilee 35
Justice and Truth! They too have heard thy
 spell,
They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty!

III

I marked Ambition in his war-array!

I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous
 cry —
 ' Ah ! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress
 stay ! 40
 Groans not her chariot on its onward way ? '
 Fly, mailed Monarch, fly !
 Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,
 No more on Murder's lurid face
 The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye ! 45
 Manes of the unnumbered slain !
 Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain !
 Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
 When human ruin choked the streams,
 Fell in conquest's gluttred hour, 50
 Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams !
 Spirits of the uncoffined slain,
 Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
 Oft, at night, in misty train,
 Rush around her narrow dwelling ! 55
 The exterminating fiend is fled —
 (Foul her life, and dark her doom)
 Mighty armies of the dead
 Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb !
 Then with prophetic song relate, 60
 Each some tyrant-murderer's fate !

IV

Departing Year ! 'twas on no earthly shore

My soul beheld thy vision ! Where alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
Aye Memory sits : thy robe inscribed with gore, 65
With many an unimaginable groan

Thou storied'st thy sad hours ! Silence ensued,

Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with
glories shone.

Then, his eye wild ardours glancing, 70
From the choired gods advancing,

The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,
And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

v

Throughout the blissful throng,
Hushed were harp and song : 75

Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads
seven,

(The mystic Words of Heaven)

Permissive signal make :

The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings
and spake !

'Thou in stormy blackness throning 80
Love and uncreated Light,

By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,

Seize thy terrors, Arm of might !

By Peace with proffer'd insult scared,

Masked hate and envying scorn ! 85
 By years of havoc yet unborn !
 And Hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared !
 But chief by Afric's wrongs,
 Strange, horrible, and foul !
 By what deep guilt belongs 90
 To the deaf Synod, ' full of gifts and lies !'
 By Wealth's insensate laugh ! by Torture's
 howl !
 Avenger, rise !
 For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,
 Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow ? 95
 Speak ! from thy storm-black Heaven, O speak
 aloud !
 And on the darkling foe
 Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain
 cloud !
 O dart the flash ! O rise and deal the blow !
 The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries ! 100
 Hark ! how wide Nature joins her groans
 below !
 Rise, God of Nature ! rise.'

VI

The voice had ceased, the vision fled ;
 Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
 And ever, when the dream of night 105
 Renews the phantom to my sight,

Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs ;
My ears throb hot ; my eye-balls start ;
My brain with horrid tumult swims ;
Wild is the tempest of my heart ; 110
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of death !
No stranger agony confounds
The soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds, 115
Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead !
(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
And the night-wind clamours hoarse !
See ! the starting wretch's head
Lies pillowed on a brother's corse !) 120

VII

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
O Albion ! O my mother Isle !
Thy vallies, fair as Eden's bowers,
Glitter green with sunny showers ;
Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells 125
Echo to the bleat of flocks ;
(Those grassy hills, those glittering dells
Proudly ramparted with rocks)
And Ocean mid his uproar wild
Speaks safety to his Island-child ! 130
Hence for many a fearness age
Has social Quiet loved thy shore ;

Nor ever proud invader's rage
Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with
gore.

VIII

Abandon'd of Heaven! mad Avarice thy
guide, 135
At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride —
Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou
hast stood,
And join'd the wild yelling of Famine and
Blood!
The nations curse thee! They with eager
wondering
Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture,
scream! 140
Strange-eyed Destruction! who with many a
dream
Of central fires through nether seas up-thun-
dering
Soothes her fierce solitude; yet as she lies
By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes, 145
O Albion! thy predestined ruins rise,
The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth
leap,
Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed
sleep.

IX

Away, my soul, away !

In vain, in vain the birds of warning
sing — 150

And hark ! I hear the famished brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind !

Away, my soul, away !

I unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil 155

Soliciting for food my scanty soil,

Have wailed my country with a loud La-
ment.

Now I recentre my immortal mind

In the deep sabbath of meek self-content ;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that be-
dim 160

God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

TO THE
REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE

OF OTTERY ST. MARY, DEVON

WITH SOME POEMS

1791-1797

Notus in fratres animi paterni.

HOR. *Carm.* lib. 1, 2.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having passed
His youth and early manhood in the stir

And turmoil of the world, retreats at length,
 With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
 To the same dwelling where his father dwelt ; 5
 And haply views his tottering little ones
 Embrace those aged knees and climb that lap,
 On which first kneeling his own infancy
 Lisped its brief prayer. Such, O my earliest
 friend !

Thy lot, and such thy brothers too enjoy. 10
 At distance did ye climb life's upland road,
 Yet cheered and cheering : now fraternal love
 Hath drawn you to one centre. Be your days
 Holy, and blest and blessing may ye live !

To me the Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed 15
 A different fortune and more different mind —
 Me from the spot where first I sprang to light
 Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had fixed
 Its first domestic loves ; and hence through life
 Chasing chance-started friendships. A brief
 while 20

Some have preserved me from life's pelting ills ;
 But, like a tree with leaves of feeble stem,
 If the clouds lasted, and a sudden breeze
 Ruffled the boughs, they on my head at once
 Dropped the collected shower ; and some most
 false, 25
 False and fair-foliaged as the Manchineel,

Have tempted me to slumber in their shade
 E'en mid the storm ; then breathing subtlest
 damps,
 Mixed their own venom with the rain from
 Heaven,
 That I woke poisoned ! But, all praise to Him 30
 Who gives us all things, more have yielded me
 Permanent shelter ; and beside one friend,
 Beneath the impervious covert of one oak,
 I've raised a lowly shed, and know the names
 Of Husband and of Father ; not unhearing 35
 Of that divine and nightly-whispering voice,
 Which from my childhood to maturer years
 Spake to me of predestinated wreaths,
 Bright with no fading colours !

Yet at times

My soul is sad, that I have roamed through
 life 40
 Still most a stranger, most with naked heart
 At mine own home and birth-place : chiefly
 then,
 When I remember thee, my earliest friend !
 Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my
 youth ;
 Didst trace my wanderings with a father's eye ; 45
 And boding evil yet still hoping good,
 Rebuked each fault, and over all my woes

Sorrowed in silence! He who counts alone
The beatings of the solitary heart,
That Being knows, how I have loved thee ever, 50
Loved as a brother, as a son revered thee!
Oh! 'tis to me an ever new delight,
To talk of thee and thine: or when the blast
Of the shrill winter, rattling our rude sash,
Endears the cleanly hearth and social bowl; 55
Or when as now, on some delicious eve,
We in our sweet sequestered orchard-plot
Sit on the tree crooked earth-ward; whose old
boughs,
That hang above us in an arborous roof,
Stirred by the faint gale of departing May, 60
Send their loose blossoms slanting o'er our
heads!

Nor dost not *thou* sometimes recall those
hours,
When with the joy of hope thou gavest thine ear
To my wild firstling-lays. Since then my song
Hath sounded deeper notes, such as beseem 65
Or that sad wisdom folly leaves behind,
Or such as, tuned to these tumultuous times,
Cope with the tempest's swell!

These various strains,
Which I have framed in many a various mood,

Accept, my Brother ! and (for some perchance 70
Will strike discordant on thy milder mind)
If aught of error or intemperate truth
Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it !

LINES TO W. LINLEY, ESQ.

WHILE HE SANG A SONG TO
PURCELL'S MUSIC

1797-1800

WHILE my young cheek retains its healthful
hues,
And I have many friends who hold me dear,
Linley ! methinks, I would not often hear
Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
All memory of the wrongs and sore distress 5
For which my miserable brethren weep !
But should uncomforted misfortunes steep
My daily bread in tears and bitterness ;
And if at death's dread moment I should lie
With no beloved face at my bed-side, 10
To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks such strains, breathed by my angel-
guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had
died !

THE THREE GRAVES

A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S TALE

1707-1809

[PART I — FROM MS.]

BENEATH this thorn when I was young,
 This thorn that blooms so sweet,
 We loved to stretch our lazy limbs
 In summer's noon-tide heat.

And hither too the old man came, 5
 The maiden and her fear,
 'Then tell me, Sexton, tell me why
 The toad has harbour here.

The Thorn is neither dry nor dead,
 But still it blossoms sweet; 10
 Then tell me why all round its roots
 The dock and nettle meet.

Why here the hemlock, etc. [*sic in MS.*]

Why these three graves all side by side,
 Beneath the flow'ry thorn, 15
 Stretch out their lengths so green and dark,
 By any foot unworn.'

There, there a ruthless mother lies
 Beneath the flowery thorn ;
 And there a barren wife is laid, 20
 And there a maid forlorn.

The barren wife and maid forlorn
 Did love each other dear ;
 The ruthless mother wrought the woe,
 And cost them many a tear. 25

Fair Ellen was of serious mind,
 Her temper mild and even,
 And Mary, graceful as the fir
 That points the spire to heaven.

Young Edward he to Mary said, 30
 ‘ I would you were my bride,’
 And she was scarlet as he spoke,
 And turned her face to hide.

‘ You know my mother she is rich,
 And you have little gear ; 35
 And go and if she say not Nay,
 Then I will be your feer.’

Young Edward to the mother went,
 To him the mother said :
 ‘ In truth you are a comely man ; 40
 You shall my daughter wed.’

[In Mary's joy fair Eleanor
 Did bear a sister's part ;
 For why, tho' not akin in blood,
 They sisters were in heart.]

45

Small need to tell to any man
 That ever shed a tear
 What passed within the lover's heart
 The happy day so near.

The mother, more than mother's use,
 Rejoiced when they were by ;
 And all the ' course of wooing ' passed
 Beneath the mother's eye.

50

And here within the flowering thorn
 How deep they drank of joy :
 The mother fed upon the sight,
 Nor . . . [sic in MS.]

55

[PART II — FROM MS.]

And now the wedding day was fix'd,
 The wedding-ring was bought ;
 The wedding-cake with her own hand
 The ruthless mother wrought.

60

' And when to-morrow's sun shines forth
 The maid shall be a bride ' ;

Thus Edward to the mother spake
While she sate by his side. 65

Alone they sate within the bower :
The mother's colour fled,
For Mary's foot was heard above —
She decked the bridal bed.

And when her foot was on the stairs 70
To meet her at the door,
With steady step the mother rose,
And silent left the bower.

She stood, her back against the door,
And when her child drew near — 75
' Away ! away ! ' the mother cried,
' Ye shall not enter here.

' Would ye come here, ye maiden vile,
And rob me of my mate ? ' .
And on her child the mother scowled 80
A deadly leer of hate.

Fast rooted to the spot, you guess,
The wretched maiden stood,
As pale as any ghost of night
That wanteth flesh and blood. 85

She did not groan, she did not fall,
She did not shed a tear,
Nor did she cry, 'Oh! mother, why
May I not enter here?'

But wildly up the stairs she ran, 90
As if her sense was fled.
And then her trembling limbs she threw
Upon the bridal bed.

The mother she to Edward went
Where he sate in the bower, 95
And said, 'That woman is not fit
To be your paramour.

'She is my child — it makes my heart
With grief and trouble swell;
I rue the hour I gave her birth, 100
For never worse befel.

'For she is fierce and she is proud,
And of an envious mind;
A wily hypocrite she is,
And giddy as the wind. 105

'And if you go to church with her,
You'll rue the bitter smart;
For she will wrong your marriage-bed,
And she will break your heart.

‘ Oh God, to think that I have shared
 Her deadly sin so long ;
 She is my child, and therefore I
 As mother held my tongue. 110

‘ She is my child, I’ve risked for her
 My living soul’s estate : 115
 I cannot say my daily prayers,
 The burthen is so great.

‘ And she would scatter gold about
 Until her back was bare ;
 And should you swing for lust of hers 120
 In truth she’d little care.’

Then in a softer tone she said,
 And took him by the hand :
 ‘ Sweet Edward, for one kiss of your’s
 I’d give my house and land. 125

‘ And if you’ll go to church with me,
 And take me for your bride,
 I’ll make you heir of all I have —
 Nothing shall be denied.’

Then Edward started from his seat, 130
 And he laughed loud and long —
 ‘ In truth, good mother, you are mad,
 Or drunk with liquor strong.’

To him no word the mother said,
But on her knee she fell, 135
And fetched her breath while thrice your hand
Might toll the passing-bell.

‘Thou daughter now above my head,
Whom in my womb I bore,
May every drop of thy heart’s blood 140
Be curst for ever more.

‘And cursed be the hour when first
I heard thee wawl and cry;
And in the Church-yard cursed be
The grave where thou shalt lie!’ 145

And Mary on the bridal-bed
Her mother’s curse had heard;
And while the cruel mother spake
The bed beneath her stirred.

In wrath young Edward left the hall, 150
And turning round he sees
The mother looking up to God
And still upon her knees.

Young Edward he to Mary went
When on the bed she lay: 155
‘Sweet love, this is a wicked house —
Sweet love, we must away.’

He raised her from the bridal-bed,
 All pale and wan with fear ;
 ‘ No Dog,’ quoth he, ‘ if he were mine, 160
 No Dog would kennel here.’

He led her from the bridal-bed,
 He led her from the stairs.

The mother still was in the bower,
 And with a greedy heart 165
 She *drank perdition* on her knees,
 Which never may depart.

But when their steps were heard below
 On God she did not call ;
 She did forget the God of Heaven, 170
 For they were in the hall.

She started up — the servant maid
 Did see her when she rose ;
 And she has oft declared to me
 The blood within her froze. 175

As Edward led his bride away
 And hurried to the door,
 The ruthless mother springing forth
 Stopped midway on the floor.

What did she mean? What did she mean? 180
For with a smile she cried :

‘ Unblest ye shall not pass my door,
The bride-groom and his bride.

‘ Be blithe as lambs in April are,
As flies when fruits are red ; 185
May God forbid that thought of me
Should haunt your marriage-bed.

‘ And let the night be given to bliss,
The day be given to glee :
I am a woman weak and old, 190
Why turn a thought on me ?

‘ What can an aged mother do,
And what have ye to dread ?
A curse is wind, it hath no strength
To haunt your marriage-bed.’ 195

When they were gone and out of sight
She rent her hoary hair,
And foamed like any Dog of June
When sultry sunbeams glare.

.
Now ask you why the barren wife, 200
And why the maid forlorn,
And why the ruthless mother lies
Beneath the flowering thorn ?

Three times, three times this spade of mine,
 In spite of bolt or bar, 205
 Did from beneath the belfry come,
 When spirits wandering are.

And when the mother's soul to Hell
 By howling fiends was borne,
 This spade was seen to mark her grave 210
 Beneath the flowery thorn.

And when the death-knock at the door
 Called home the maid forlorn,
 This spade was seen to mark her grave
 Beneath the flowery thorn. 215

And 'tis a fearful, fearful tree ;
 The ghosts that round it meet,
 'Tis they that cut the rind at night,
 Yet still it blossoms sweet.

.

[End of MS.]

PART III

The grapes upon the Vicar's wall 220
 Were ripe as ripe could be ;
 And yellow leaves in sun and wind
 Were falling from the tree.

On the hedge-elms in the narrow lane
Still swung the spikes of corn : 225
Dear Lord ! it seems but yesterday —
Young Edward's marriage-morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,
There leads from Edward's door
A mossy track, all over boughed, 230
For half a mile or more.

And from their house-door by that track
The bride and bridegroom went ;
Sweet Mary, though she was not gay,
Seemed cheerful and content. 235

But when they to the church-yard came,
I've heard poor Mary say,
As soon as she stepped into the sun,
Her heart it died away.

And when the Vicar join'd their hands, 240
Her limbs did creep and freeze ;
But when they prayed, she thought she saw
Her mother on her knees.

And o'er the church-path they returned —
I saw poor Mary's back, 245
Just as she stepped beneath the boughs
Into the mossy track.

Her feet upon the mossy track
 The married maiden set :
 That moment — I have heard her say — 250
 She wished she could forget.

The shade o'er-flushed her limbs with heat —
 Then came a chill like death :
 And when the merry bells rang out,
 They seemed to stop her breath. 255

Beneath the foulest mother's curse
 No child could ever thrive :
 A mother is a mother still,
 The holiest thing alive.

So five months passed : the mother still 260
 Would never heal the strife ;
 But Edward was a loving man,
 And Mary a fond wife.

' My sister may not visit us,
 My mother says her nay : 265
 O Edward ! you are all to me,
 I wish for your sake I could be
 More lifesome and more gay.

' I'm dull and sad ! indeed, indeed
 I know I have no reason ! 270

Perhaps I am not well in health,
And 'tis a gloomy season.'

'Twas a drizzly time — no ice, no snow !
And on the few fine days
She stirred not out, lest she might meet 275
Her mother in the ways.

But Ellen, spite of miry ways
And weather dark and dreary,
Trudged every day to Edward's house,
And made them all more cheery. 280

Oh ! Ellen was a faithful friend,
More dear than any sister !
As cheerful too as singing lark ;
And she ne'er left them till 'twas dark,
And then they always missed her. 285

And now Ash-Wednesday came — that day
But few to church repair :
For on that day you know we read
The Commination prayer.

Our late old Vicar, a kind man, 290
Once, Sir, he said to me,
He wished that service was clean out
Of our good Liturgy.

The mother walked into the church —
To Ellen's seat she went :

295

Though Ellen always kept her church
All church-days during Lent.

And gentle Ellen welcomed her
With courteous looks and mild :

Thought she, ' What if her heart should melt, 300
And all be reconciled ! '

The day was scarcely like a day —

The clouds were black outright :
And many a night, with half a moon,
I've seen the church more light.

305

The wind was wild ; against the glass

The rain did beat and bicker ;
The church-tower swinging over head,
You scarce could hear the Vicar !

And then and there the mother knelt,
And audibly she cried —

310

' Oh ! may a clinging curse consume
This woman by my side !

' O hear me, hear me, Lord in Heaven,
Although you take my life —

O curse this woman, at whose house
Young Edward woo'd his wife.

‘ By night and day, in bed and bower,
O let her cursed be !!! ’

So having prayed, steady and slow, 320
She rose up from her knee !
And left the church, nor e’er again
The church-door entered she.

I saw poor Ellen kneeling still,
So pale ! I guessed not why : 325
When she stood up, there plainly was
A trouble in her eye.

And when the prayers were done, we all
Came round and asked her why :
Giddy she seemed, and sure, there was 330
A trouble in her eye.

But ere she from the church-door stepped
She smiled and told us why :
‘ It was a wicked woman’s curse,’
Quoth she, ‘ and what care I ? ’ 335

She smiled, and smiled, and passed it off
Ere from the door she stept —
But all agree it would have been
Much better had she wept.

And if her heart was not at ease, 340
This was her constant cry —

‘ It was a wicked woman’s curse —
God’s good, and what care I? ’

There was a hurry in her looks,
Her struggles she redoubled : 345
‘ It was a wicked woman’s curse,
And why should I be troubled? ’

These tears will come — I dandled her
When ’twas the merest fairy —
Good creature ! and she hid it all : 350
She told it not to Mary.

But Mary heard the tale : her arms
Round Ellen’s neck she threw ;
‘ O Ellen, Ellen, she cursed me,
And now she hath cursed you ! ’ 355

I saw young Edward by himself
Stalk fast adown the lee,
He snatched a stick from every fence,
A twig from every tree.

He snapped them still with hand or knee, 360
And then away they flew !
As if with his uneasy limbs
He knew not what to do !

You see, good sir ! that single hill ?
His farm lies underneath : 365
He heard it there, he heard it all,
And only gnashed his teeth.

Now Ellen was a darling love
In all his joys and cares :
And Ellen's name and Mary's name 370
Fast-linked they both together came,
Whene'er he said his prayers.

And in the moment of his prayers
He loved them both alike :
Yea, both sweet names with one sweet joy 375
Upon his heart did strike !

He reach'd his home, and by his looks
They saw his inward strife :
And they clung round him with their arms,
Both Ellen and his wife. 380

And Mary could not check her tears,
So on his breast she bowed ;
Then frenzy melted into grief,
And Edward wept aloud.

Dear Ellen did not weep at all, 385
But closelier did she cling,

And turned her face and looked as if
She saw some frightful thing.

PART IV

To see a man tread over graves
I hold it no good mark ;
'Tis wicked in the sun and moon,
And bad luck in the dark !

390

You see that grave ? The Lord he gives,
The Lord, he takes away :
O Sir ! the child of my old age
Lies there as cold as clay.

395

Except that grave, you scarce see one
That was not dug by me ;
I'd rather dance upon 'em all
Than tread upon these three !

400

'Aye, Sexton ! 'tis a touching tale.'
You, Sir ! are but a lad ;
This month I'm in my seventieth year,
And still it makes me sad.

And Mary's sister told it me,
For three good hours and more ;
Though I had heard it, in the main,
From Edward's self, before.

405

Well ! it passed off ! the gentle Ellen
Did well nigh dote on Mary ; 410
And she went oftener than before,
And Mary loved her more and more :
She managed all the dairy.

To market she on market-days,
To church on Sundays came ; 415
All seemed the same : all seemed so, Sir !
But all was not the same !

Had Ellen lost her mirth ? Oh ! no !
But she was seldom cheerful ;
And Edward look'd as if he thought 420
That Ellen's mirth was fearful.

When by herself, she to herself
Must sing some merry rhyme ;
She could not now be glad for hours,
Yet silent all the time. 425

And when she soothed her friend, through all
Her soothing words 'twas plain
She had a sore grief of her own,
A haunting in her brain.

And oft she said, I'm not grown thin ! 430
And then her wrist she spanned ;

And once when Mary was down-cast,
 She took her by the hand,
 And gazed upon her, and at first
 She gently pressed her hand ; 435

Then harder, till her grasp at length
 Did gripe like a convulsion !
 ‘ Alas ! ’ said she, ‘ we ne’er can be
 Made happy by compulsion ! ’

And once her both arms suddenly 440
 Round Mary’s neck she flung,
 And her heart panted, and she felt
 The words upon her tongue.

She felt them coming, but no power
 Had she the words to smother ; 445
 And with a kind of shriek she cried,
 ‘ Oh Christ ! you’re like your mother ! ’

So gentle Ellen now no more
 Could make this sad house cheery ;
 And Mary’s melancholy ways 450
 Drove Edward wild and weary.

Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
 Though tired in heart and limb :
 He loved no other place, and yet
 Home was no home to him. 455

One evening he took up a book,
And nothing in it read ;
Then flung it down, and groaning cried,
‘ O ! Heaven ! that I were dead.’

Mary looked up into his face, 460
And nothing to him said ;
She tried to smile, and on his arm
Mournfully leaned her head.

And he burst into tears, and fell
Upon his knees in prayer : 465
‘ Her heart is broke ! O God ! my grief,
It is too great to bear ! ’

’Twas such a foggy time as makes
Old sextons, Sir ! like me,
Rest on their spades to cough ; the spring 470
Was late uncommonly.

And then the hot days, all at once,
They came, we knew not how :
You looked about for shade, when scarce
A leaf was on a bough. 475

It happened then (’twas in the bower,
A furlong up the wood :
Perhaps you know the place, and yet
I scarce know how you should,)

No path leads thither, 'tis not nigh 480
 To any pasture-plot ;
 But clustered near the chattering brook,
 Lone hollies marked the spot.

Those hollies of themselves a shape
 As of an arbour took, 485
 A close, round arbour ; and it stands
 Not three strides from a brook.

Within this arbour, which was still
 With scarlet berries hung,
 Were these three friends, one Sunday morn, 490
 Just as the first bell rung.

'Tis sweet to hear a brook, 'tis sweet
 To hear the Sabbath-bell,
 'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,
 Deep in a woody dell. 495

His limbs along the moss, his head
 Upon a mossy heap,
 With shut-up senses, Edward lay :
 That brook e'en on a working day
 Might chatter one to sleep. 500

And he had passed a restless night,
 And was not well in health ;

The women sat down by his side,
And talked as 'twere by stealth.

‘The Sun peeps through the close thick leaves,
See, dearest Ellen ! see ! 506
’Tis in the leaves, a little sun,
No bigger than your ee ;

‘A tiny sun, and it has got
A perfect glory too ; 510
Ten thousand threads and hairs of light,
Make up a glory gay and bright
Round that small orb, so blue.’

And then they argued of those rays,
What colour they might be ; 515
Says this, ‘They’re mostly green’ ; says that,
‘They’re amber-like to me.’

So they sat chatting, while bad thoughts
Were troubling Edward’s rest ;
But soon they heard his hard quick pants, 520
And the thumping in his breast.

‘A mother too !’ these self-same words
Did Edward mutter plain ;
His face was drawn back on itself,
With horror and huge pain. 525

This Lime-Tree Bower my Prison 99

Both groan'd at once, for both knéw well
What thoughts were in his mind ;
When he waked up, and stared like one
That hath been just struck blind.

He sat upright ; and ere the dream 530
Had had time to depart,
' O God, forgive me ! ' (he exclaimed)
' I have torn out her heart.'

Then Ellen shrieked, and forthwith burst 535
Into ungentle laughter ;
And Mary shivered, where she sat,
And never she smiled after.

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON

ADDRESSED TO CHARLES LAMB, OF THE INDIA
HOUSE, LONDON

1797-1800

In the June of 1797 some long-expected friends paid a visit to the author's cottage; and on the morning of their arrival, he met with an accident, which disabled him from walking during the whole time of their stay. One evening, when they had left him for a few hours, he composed the following lines in the garden-bower.

WELL, they are gone, and here must I remain,
This lime-tree bower my prison ! I have lost

L. of C.

Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
Most sweet to my remembrance even when age
Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness! They,
meanwhile,

5
Friends, whom I never more may meet again,
On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,
Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance,
To that still roaring dell, of which I told;
The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep, 10
And only speckled by the mid-day sun;
Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to
rock

Flings arching like a bridge; — that branchless
ash,

Unsunned and damp, whose few poor yellow
leaves

Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still, 15
Fanned by the water-fall! and there my friends
Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,
That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)
Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge
Of the blue-clay stone.

Now, my friends emerge 20
Beneath the wide wide Heaven — and view
again

The many-steepled tract magnificent
Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,

This Lime-Tree Bower my Prison 101

With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light
up

The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two
Isles

25

Of purple shadow ! Yes ! they wander on
In gladness all ; but thou, methinks, most glad,
My gentle-hearted Charles ! for thou hast pined
And hungered after Nature, many a year,
In the great City pent, winning thy way

30

With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain
And strange calamity ! Ah ! slowly sink
Behind the western ridge, thou glorious Sun !
Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,
Ye purple heath-flowers ! richlier burn, ye
clouds !

35

Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves !
And kindle, thou blue Ocean ! So my friend
Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have
stood,

Silent with swimming sense ; yea, gazing round
On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem 40
Less gross than bodily ; and of such hues
As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes
Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight

Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad
As I myself were there ! Nor in this bower, 45
This little lime-tree bower, have I not marked

Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath the
blaze
Hung the transparent foliage ; and I watched
Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to see
The shadow of the leaf and stem above, 50
Dappling its sunshine ! And that walnut-tree
Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance lay
Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest
grass
Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue 55
Through the late twilight : and though now the
bat
Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,
Yet still the solitary humble-bee
Sings in the bean-flower ! Henceforth I shall
know
That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure ; 60
No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,
No waste so vacant, but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to Love and Beauty ! and sometimes
'Tis well to be bereft of promised good, 65
That we may lift the soul, and contemplate
With lively joy the joys we cannot share.
My gentle-hearted Charles ! when the last rook
Beat its straight path along the dusky air
Homewards, I blest it ! deeming, its black wing 70

(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)
 Had cross'd the mighty orb's dilated glory,
 While thou stood'st gazing; or when all was
 still,
 Flew creaking o'er thy head, and had a charm
 For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom 75
 No sound is dissonant which tells of Life.

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER

A WAR ECLOGUE

1797-1798

The Scene a desolated Tract in La Vendée. FAMINE is discovered lying on the ground; to her enter FIRE and SLAUGHTER.

Fam. SISTERS! sisters! who sent you here?

Slau. [*to Fire*]. I will whisper it in her ear.

Fire. No! no! no!

Spirits hear what spirits tell:

'Twill make an holiday in Hell.

5

No! no! no!

Myself, I named him once below,

And all the souls, that damned be,

Leaped up at once in anarchy,

Clapped their hands and danced for glee.

10

They no longer heeded me;

But laughed to hear Hell's burning rafters

Unwillingly re-echo laughter!

No ! no ! no !

Spirits hear what spirits tell :
'Twill make an holiday in Hell !

Fam. Whisper it, sister ! so and so !
In a dark hint, soft and slow.

Slau. Letters four do form his name —
And who sent you ?

Both. The same ! the same !

Slau. He came by stealth, and unlocked my
den,

And I have drunk the blood since then
Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

Both. Who bade you do 't ?

Slau. The same ! the same !
Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried Halloo !
To him alone the praise is due.

Fam. Thanks, sister, thanks ! the men have
bled,

Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle ;

With bones and skulls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and carrion-crow
And the homeless dog — but they would not
go.

So off I flew : for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare ?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,

And through the chink of a cottage-wall —
Can you guess what I saw there ?

Both. Whisper it, sister ! in our ear.

Fam. A baby beat its dying mother : 40

I had starved the one and was starving the
other !

Both. Who bade you do't ?

Fam. The same ! the same !

Letters four do form his name.

He let me loose, and cried, Halloo !

To him alone the praise is due. 45

Fire. Sisters ! I from Ireland came !

Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,

I triumph'd o'er the setting sun !

And all the while the work was done,

On as I strode with my huge strides, 50

I flung back my head and I held my sides,

It was so rare 'a piece of fun

To see the sweltered cattle run

With uncouth gallop through the night,

Scared by the red and noisy light ! 55

By the light of his own blazing cot

Was many a naked Rebel shot :

The house-stream met the flame and hissed,

While crash ! fell in the roof, I wist,

On some of those old bed-ridden nurses, 60

That deal in discontent and curses.

Both. Who bade you do't ?

Fire. The same ! the same !
 Letters four do form his name.
 He let me loose, and cried Halloo !
 To him alone the praise is due. 65
All. He let us loose, and cried Halloo !
 How shall we yield him honour due ?
Fam. Wisdom comes with lack of food.
 I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,
 Till the cup of rage o'erbrim : 70
 They shall seize him and his brood —
Slau. They shall tear him limb from limb !
Fire. O thankless beldames and untrue !
 And is this all that you can do
 For him, who did so much for you ? 75
 Ninety months he, by my troth !
 Hath richly catered for you both ;
 And in an hour would you repay
 An eight years' work ? — Away ! away !
 I alone am faithful ! I 80
 Cling to him everlastingly.

KUBLA KHAN

1797,8-1816

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
 A stately pleasure-dome decree :
 Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
 Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea. 5
 So twice five miles of fertile ground
 With walls and towers were girdled round :
 And here were gardens bright with sinuous
 rills,
 Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
 And here were forests ancient as the hills, 10
 Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh ! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
 Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover !
 A savage place ! as holy and enchanted
 As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted 15
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover !
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
 seething,
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath-
 ing,
 A mighty fountain momentarily was forced :
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
 Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail :
 And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
 It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
 Five miles meandering with a mazy motion 25
 Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
 Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
 And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean :

And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

30

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves ;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.

It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice !

35

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw :
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.

40

Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome ! those caves of ice !
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware ! Beware !
His flashing eyes, his floating hair !
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

45

50

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER

IN SEVEN PARTS

1797,8-1798

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit ? et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera ? Quid agunt ? quæ loca habitant ? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari : ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrabat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus. — T. BURNET, *Archæol. Phil.* p. 68.

ARGUMENT

How a Ship having passed the Line was driven by storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole ; and how from thence she made her course to the tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell ; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country. [1798.]

PART I

It is an ancient Mariner,	An ancient	
And he stoppeth one of three.	Mariner	
‘By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,	meeteth	
Now wherefore stopp’st thou me ?	three Gal-	
	lants bid-	
	den to a wed-	
	ding-feast,	
The Bridegroom’s doors are opened wide,	and detain-	5
And I am next of kin ;	eth one.	

The guests are met, the feast is set :
May'st hear the merry din.'

He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he. 10
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!'
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

The Wed- He holds him with his glittering eye —
ding-Guest The Wedding-Guest stood still,
is spell- And listens like a three years' child : 15
bound by the eye of The Mariner hath his will.
the old sea-
faring man,
and con- The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone :
strained to He cannot choose but hear ;
hear histale. And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner. 20

'The ship was cheered, the harbour
cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the lighthouse top.

The Mari- The sun came up upon the left, 25
ner tells how Out of the sea came he!
the ship And he shone bright, and on the right
sailed south- Went down into the sea.
ward with
a good wind
and fair weather, till it reached the line.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon —' 30
The Wedding-Guest here beat his
 breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she ;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy. 35
The Wedding-Guest heareth the
 bridal
 music ; but
 the Mariner
 continueth
 his tale.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear ;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner. 40

‘ And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong :
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And chased us south along. The ship
 driven by a
 storm
 toward the
 south pole.

With sloping masts and dipping prow, 45
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the
 blast,
And southward aye we fled. 50

And now there came both mist and
snow,

And it grew wondrous cold :
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of
ice, and of
fearful
sounds
where no
living thing
was to be
seen.

And through the drifts the snowy
clifts 55

Did send a dismal sheen :
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken —
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around : 60
It cracked and growled, and roared
and howled,
Like noises in a swound !

Till a great
sea-bird,
called the
Albatross,
came
through the
snow-fog,
and was re-
ceived with
great joy
and hospi-
tality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came ;
As if it had been a Christian soul, 65
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-
fit ;

The helmsman steered us through ! 70

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner 113

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
 And lo! the Albatross

The Albatross did follow,
 And every day, for food or play,
 Came to the mariner's hollo!
 proveth a bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
 It perched for vespers nine;
 Whiles all the night, through fog-ice,
 smoke white,

Glimmered the white moon-shine.'

'God save thee, ancient Mariner!
 From the fiends, that plague thee thus! —
 Why look'st thou so?' — With my cross-bow
 I shot the Albatross.
 The ancient Mariner in- hospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen. 80

PART II

The Sun now rose upon the right:
 Out of the sea came he,
 Still hid in mist, and on the left
 Went down into the sea. 85

And the good south wind still blew
 behind,
 But no sweet bird did follow,

Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

90

His ship-
mates cry
out against
the ancient
Mariner,
for killing
the bird of
good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe :
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.
Ah wretch ! said they, the bird to slay, 95
That made the breeze to blow !

But when
the fog
cleared off,
they justify
the same,
and thus
make them-
selves ac-
complices in
the crime.

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious Sun uprist :

Then all averred, I had killed the
bird

That brought the fog and mist. 100

'Twas right, said they, such birds to
slay,

That bring the fog and mist.

The fair
breeze con-
tinues; the
ship enters
the Pacific
Ocean, and
sails north-
ward, even
till it reaches
the Line.
The ship
hath been
suddenly
becalmed.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam
flew,

The furrow followed free ;

We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea. 105

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt
down,

'Twas sad as sad could be ;

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner 115

And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea ! 110

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day, 115
We stuck, nor breath nor motion ;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink ;
Water, water, every where
Nor any drop to drink. 120

And the
Albatross
begins to be
avenged.

The very deep did rot : O Christ !
That ever this should be !
Yea, slimy things did crawl with
legs 125
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night ;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white. 130

A Spirit And some in dreams assured were
 had followed Of the Spirit that plagued us so
 them ; one Nine fathom deep he had followed us
 of the invisi- From the land of mist and snow.
 ble inhabi-
 tants of this
 planet,
 neither de- And every tongue, through utter drought,
 parted souls Was withered at the root ; 136
 nor angels ; We could not speak, no more than if
 concerning We had been choked with soot.
 whom the
 learned Jew,
 Josephus, Ah ! well a-day ! what evil looks
 and the Pla- Had I from old and young ! 140
 tonic Con- Instead of the cross, the Albatross
 stantinopoli- About my neck was hung.
 tan, Mi-
 chael Psel-
 lus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no
 climate or element without one or more.

PART III

The ship- There passed a weary time. Each
 mates, in throat
 their sore
 distress, Was parched, and glazed each eye.
 would fain A weary time ! a weary time ! 145
 throw the
 whole guilt How glazed each weary eye,
 on the an- When looking westward, I beheld
 cient Mari- A something in the sky.
 ner : in sign
 whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

The ancient At first it seemed a little speck,
 Mariner be- And then it seemed a mist ; 150
 holdeth a
 sign in the element afar off.

It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist !
And still it neared and neared :
As if it dodged a water-sprite, 155
It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail ;
Through utter drought all dumb we
stood !
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail ! a sail !
At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship ; and at a dear ransom he freeth his 160 speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips
baked,
Agape they heard me call :
Gramercy ! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.
A flash of joy ; 165

See ! see ! (I cried) she tacks no
more !
Hither to work us weal ;
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel !
And horror follows.
For can it be a ship that comes onward without wind or tide ? 170

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well nigh done !
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun ;
When that strange shape drove sud-
denly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth And straight the Sun was flecked with
him but the bars,
skeleton of (Heaven's Mother send us grace !)
a ship. As if through a dungeon-grate he
 peered
 With broad and burning face. 180

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat
loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs
are seen as
bars on the
face of the
setting Sun.
The Spec-
tre-Woman
and her
Death-mate,
and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

Are those her ribs through which the
Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

185

Her lips were red, her looks were free, Like vessel,
Her locks were yellow as gold : like crew ! 191
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice ;
'The game is done ! I've won ! I've won !'
won !'

Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush
out :
At one stride comes the dark ;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

We listened and looked sideways up !
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip !

The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp
gleamed white ;

From the sails the dew did drip —

Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

Death and
Life-in-
Death have 195
diced for the
ship's crew,
and she (the
latter) win-
neth the
ancient
Mariner.

No twilight
within the
courts of the
Sun. 200

At the ris-
ing of the
Moon,
205

One after
another,

One after one, by the star-dogged
Moon,

Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly
pang,

And cursed me with his eye.

215

His ship-
mates drop
down dead.

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

But Life-in-
Death be-
gins her
work on the
ancient
Mariner.

The souls did from their bodies fly,— 220

They fled to bliss or woe!

And every soul, it passed me by,

Like the whizz of my cross-bow!

PART IV

The Wed-
ding-Guest
feareth that
a Spirit is
talking to
him;

‘I fear thee, ancient Mariner!

I fear thy skinny hand!

225

And thou art long, and lank, and brown,

As is the ribbed sea-sand.

But
the ancient
Mariner
assureth
him of his
bodily life,
and pro-
ceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,

And thy skinny hand, so brown.’—

Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-
Guest!

230

This body dropt not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
 Alone on a wide wide sea!
 And never a saint took pity on
 My soul in agony.

235

The many men, so beautiful!
 And they all dead did lie:
 And a thousand thousand slimy things
 Lived on; and so did I.

He despis-
 eth the
 creatures
 of the calm.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
 And drew my eyes away;
 I looked upon the rotting deck,
 And there the dead men lay.

And envieth
 that they
 should live, 241
 and so many
 lie dead.

I looked to heaven, and tried to pray;
 But or ever a prayer had gusht,
 A wicked whisper came, and made
 My heart as dry as dust.

245

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
 And the balls like pulses beat;
 For the sky and the sea, and the sea
 and the sky

250

Lay like a load on my weary eye,
 And the dead were at my feet.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
 Nor rot nor reek did they:

But the
 curse liveth
 for him in
 the eye of the dead men.

The look with which they looked on
me

255

Has never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell

A spirit from on high ;

But oh ! more horrible than that

Is a curse in a dead man's eye ! 260

Seven days, seven nights, I saw that
curse,

And yet I could not die.

In his lone-
liness and
fixedness he
yearneth
towards the
journeying
Moon, and

the stars
that still
sojourn, yet
still move
onward ;
and every
where the
blue sky
belongs to
them, and
is their ap-
pointed rest,
and their

The moving Moon went up the sky,

And no where did abide :

Softly she was going up,

And a star or two beside — 265

Her beams bemoaned the sultry main,

Like April hoar-frost spread ;

But where the ship's huge shadow lay,

The charmed water burnt alway 270

A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,

I watched the water-snakes :

They moved in tracks of shining white,

native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unan-
nounced, as lords that are certainly expected and yet there is a silent
joy at their arrival.

And when they reared, the elfish light 275
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every
track
flash of golden fire.

By the light
of the
Moon he
beholdeth
God's crea-
tures of the
great calm. 280

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gushed from my heart,
And I blessed them unaware :
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

Their
beauty and
their happi-
ness.
He blesseth 285
them in his
heart.

The selfsame moment I could pray ;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

The spell
begins to
break. 290

PART V

Oh sleep ! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole !
To Mary Queen the praise be given !
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

295

By grace of The silly buckets on the deck,
 the holy That had so long remained,
 Mother, the I dreamt that they were filled with dew ;
 ancient Mariner And when I awoke, it rained. 300
 is refreshed
 with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
 My garments all were dank ;
 Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
 And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs :
 I was so light — almost 306
 I thought that I had died in sleep,
 And was a blessed ghost.

He heareth And soon I heard a roaring wind :
 sounds and It did not come anear ; 310
 seeth strange
 sights and But with its sound it shook the sails,
 commotions That were so thin and sere.
 in the sky
 and the ele-
 ment.

The upper air burst into life !
 And a hundred fire-flags sheen,
 To and fro they were hurried about ! 315
 And to and fro, and in and out,
 The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
 And the sails did sigh like sedge ;

And the rain poured down from one
 black cloud ; 320
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and
 still

The Moon was at its side :
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag, 325
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on !
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan. 330

The bodies
of the ship's
crew are in-
spired, and
the ship
moves on ;

They groaned, they stirred, they all
 uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes ;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved
 on ; 335
Yet never a breeze up blew ;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do ;

They raised their limbs like lifeless
tools —

We were a ghastly crew.

340

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee :
The body and I pulled at one rope
But he said nought to me.

But not by ' I fear thee, ancient Mariner ! ' 345
the souls of Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest !
the men, 'Twas not those souls that fled in
nor by daemons of pain,
earth or Which to their corpses came again,
middle air, But a troop of spirits blest :
but by a blessed troop
of angelic For when it dawned — they dropped
spirits, sent down by the invocation 350
of the And clustered round the mast ;
guardian Sweet sounds rose slowly through their
saint. mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun ; 355
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing ;
Sometimes all little birds that are, 360
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning !

And now 't was like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute ;
And now it is an angel's song, 365
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased ; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June, 370
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe :
Slowly and smoothly went the ship, 375
Moved onward from beneath.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid : and it was he
That made the ship to go. 380

The lone-
some Spirit
from the
south-pole
carries on
the ship as

far as the Line, in obedience to the an-
gelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean :
But in a minute she 'gan stir, 385
With a short uneasy motion —
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound : 390
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swoond.

The Polar Spirit's fellow-dæmons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong ; and two of them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare ;
But ere my living life returned, 395
I heard and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

‘ Is it he ? ’ quoth one, ‘ Is this the man ?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low 400
The harmless Albatross.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.' 405

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew :
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance
done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI

FIRST VOICE

'But tell me, tell me ! speak again, 410
Thy soft response renewing —
What makes that ship drive on so
fast ?
What is the ocean doing ?'

SECOND VOICE

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast ; 415
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast —

If he may know which way to go ;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see ! how graciously 420
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE

The Mari- ' But why drives on that ship so fast,
ner hath Without or wave or wind ?'
been cast in-
to a trance ;

SECOND VOICE

for the an-
gelic power ' The air is cut away before,
causeth the And closes from behind. 425
vessel to
drive north-

ward faster
than human Fly, brother, fly! more high, more
life could high!
endure.

Or we shall be belated :
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The super- I woke, and we were sailing on 430
natural
motion is
retarded ;

As in a gentle weather :
'T was night, calm night, the moon
the Mariner was high,

awakes, and The dead men stood together.

his penance
begins

anew.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter : 435
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they
died,

Had never passed away :

I could not draw my eyes from theirs, 440
Nor turn them up to pray.

And now this spell was snapt : once more The curse
is finally
expiated.

I viewed the ocean green,
And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen — 445

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend 450
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made :
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade. 455

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring —
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship, 460
Yet she sailed softly too :

Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze —
On me alone it blew.

And the
ancient
Mariner be-
holdeth his
native
country.

Oh ! dream of joy ! is this indeed
The light-house top I see ?
Is this the hill ? is this the kirk ?
Is this mine own countree ?

465

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray —
O let me be awake, my God !
Or let me sleep alway.

470

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn !
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

475

The rock shone bright, the kirk no
less,
That stands above the rock :
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

481

The angelic
spirits leave
the dead
bodies,

A little distance from the prow	And appear	
Those crimson shadows were :	in their own	
I turned my eyes upon the deck —	forms of	
Oh, Christ ! what saw I there !	light.	486

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood !
A man all light, a seraph-man, 490
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand :
It was a heavenly sight !
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light ; 495

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart —
No voice ; but oh ! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars, 500
I heard the Pilot's cheer ;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast : 505
Dear Lord in Heaven ! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third — I heard his voice :
 It is the Hermit good !
 He singeth loud his godly hymns 510
 That he makes in the wood.
 He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash
 away
 The Albatross's blood.

PART VII

The Her-
 mit of the
 Wood,

This Hermit good lives in that wood
 Which slopes down to the sea. 515
 How loudly his sweet voice he
 rears !

He loves to talk with marineres
 That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and
 eve —

He hath a cushion plump : 520
 It is the moss that wholly hides
 The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared : I heard them
 talk,

‘ Why, this is strange, I trow !
 Where are those lights so many and
 fair, 525
 That signal made but now ? ’

‘Strange, by my faith!’ the Hermit Approach-
 said — eth the

‘And they answered not our cheer!’ ship with
wonder

The planks looked warped! and see
 those sails,

How thin they are and sere! 530

I never saw aught like to them,

Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag

My forest-brook along;

When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow, 535

And the owlet whoops to the wolf be-

low,

That eats the she-wolf’s young.’

‘Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look —

(The Pilot made reply)

I am a-feared’ — ‘Push on, push on!’ 540

Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,

But I nor spake nor stirred;

The boat came close beneath the ship,

And straight a sound was heard. 545

Under the water it rumbled on,

Still louder and more dread:

The ship
 suddenly
 sinketh.

It reached the ship, it split the bay ;
The ship went down like lead.

The ancient Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Mariner is Which sky and ocean smote, 551
saved in the Like one that hath been seven days
Pilot's boat. drowned

My body lay afloat ;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat. 555

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round ;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.

I moved my lips — the Pilot shrieked 560
And fell down in a fit ;
The holy Hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars : the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go, 565
Laughed loud and long, and all the
while

His eyes went to and fro.
' Ha ! ha ! ' quoth he, ' full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree, 570
I stood on the firm land!

The Hermit stepped forth from the
boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

‘O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!’ The ancient
The Hermit crossed his brow. Mariner 575
‘Say quick,’ quoth he, ‘I bid thee say — earnestly
What manner of man art thou?’ entreateth
the Hermit

Forthwith this frame of mine was the penance
wrenched of life falls
on him.

With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale; 580
And then it left me free.

Since then, at an uncertain hour, And ever
That agony returns: and anon
And till my ghastly tale is told, throughout
This heart within me burns. his future 584
life an agony
constrain-
eth him to
travel from
land to land,

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear
me:

To him my tale I teach. 590

What loud uproar bursts from that
door!

The wedding-guests are there :
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are :
And hark the little vesper bell, 595
Which biddeth me to prayer !

O Wedding-Guest ! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea :
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be. 600

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company ! —

To walk together to the kirk, 605
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay !

And to teach, by
his own
example,
love and
reverence to
all things that God made and loveth. 610

Farewell, farewell ! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest !
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all. 615

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone : and now the Wedding-Guest 620
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been
stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn. 625

CHRISTABEL

1797, 1800-1816

PART THE FIRST

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock,
Tu—whit ! —— Tu—whoo !
And hark, again ! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew. 5

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which

From her kennel beneath the rock
Maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower, 11
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark. 15
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill, the cloud is gray : 20
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late, 25
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away. 30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,

And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest mistletoe :
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree, 35
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel !
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell. — 40
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill ; the forest bare ;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak ?
There is not wind enough in the air 45
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek —
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can, 50
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel !
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !
She folded her arms beneath her cloak, 55
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there ?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone : 60
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair. 65
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she —
Beautiful exceedingly !

Mary mother, save me now !
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou ? 70

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet : —
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness :
Stretch forth thy hand and have no fear ! 75
Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet : —

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine : 80
Five warriors seized me yesternorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :

They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind, 85
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be ; 90
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive. 95
Some muttered words his comrades spoke :
He placed me underneath this oak ;
He swore they would return with haste ;
Whither they went I cannot tell —
I thought I heard, some minutes past, 100
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine : 105
O well, bright dame ! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline ;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal

To guide and guard you safe and free 110
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose : and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel : 115
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell ;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth, 120
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well ;
A little door she opened straight, 125
All in the middle of the gate ;
The gate that was ironed within and without
Where an army in battle array had marched
out.

The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main 130
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate :
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear, 135
They crossed the court : right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side,
Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress ! 140
Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old 145
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make !
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
Never till now she uttered yell 150
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will ! 155
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying ;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye, 160

And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

165

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath !
And now have reached her chamber door ;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

170

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

175

180

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.

185

She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine, 190
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn ? 195
Christabel answered — Woe is me !
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell 200
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear ! that thou wert here !
I would, said Geraldine, she were !

But soon with altered voice, said she —
' Off, wandering mother ! Peak and pine ! 205
I have power to bid thee flee.'
Alas ! what ails poor Geraldine ?
Why stares she with unsettled eye ?
Can she the bodiless dead espy ?
And why with hollow voice cries she, 210

‘ Off, woman, off ! this hour is mine —
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off ! ’tis given to me.’

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue — 215
Alas ! said she, this ghastly ride —
Dear lady ! it hath wildered you !
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, ‘ ’tis over now ! ’

Again the wild-flower wine she drank : 220
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright :
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée. 225

And thus the lofty lady spake —
‘ All they who live in the upper sky,
Do love you, holy Christabel !
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befel, 230
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself ; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.’

Quoth Christabel, So let it be ! 235
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro, 240
That vain it were her lids to close ;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed, 245
And slowly rolled her eyes around ;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast :
Her silken robe, and inner vest, 250
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold ! her bosom and half her side ——
A sight to dream of, not to tell !
O shield her ! shield sweet Christabel !

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs ; 255
Ah ! what a stricken look was hers !
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay ;

Then suddenly, as one defied, 260
 Collects herself in scorn and pride,
 And lay down by the Maiden's side! —
 And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah wel-a-day!
 And with low voice and doleful look 265
 These words did say:
 ' In the touch of this bosom there worketh a
 spell,
 Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
 Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-
 morrow,
 This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
 But vainly thou warrest, 271
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning, 275
 And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair;
 And didst bring her home with thee in love and
 in charity,
 To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.'

THE CONCLUSION

TO PART THE FIRST

It was a lovely sight to see
 The lady Christabel, when she 280

Was praying at the old oak tree.
Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows ; 285
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast ;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale —
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear, 290
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me !)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is — 295
O sorrow and shame ! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree ?
And lo ! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild, 300
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine ! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine ! one hour was thine — 305
Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,

The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo ! tu—whoo !
Tu—whoo ! tu—whoo ! from wood and
fell !

310

And see ! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance ;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft ; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes ; and tears she sheds — 315
Large tears that leave the lashes bright !
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light !

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess, 320
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
Comes back and tingles in her feet. 325
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
What if she knew her mother near ?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call : 330
For the blue sky bends over all !

PART THE SECOND

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead : 335
These words Sir Leoline will say
Many a morn to his dying day !

And hence the custom and law began
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell, 340
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke — a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell ! 345
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can !
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair, 350
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother ; 355
And oft too, by the knell offended,

Just as their one ! two ! three ! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borrowdale.

The air is still ! through mist and cloud 360
That merry peal comes ringing loud ;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed ;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight, 365
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
' Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel ?
I trust that you have rested well.'

And Christabel awoke and spied 370
The same who lay down by her side —
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree !
Nay, fairer yet ! and yet more fair !
For she belike hath drunken deep 375
Of all the blessedness of sleep !
And while she spake, her looks, her air,
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts. 380
' Sure I have sinn'd ! ' said Christabel,
' Now heaven be praised if all be well !'

And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind 385
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown, 390
She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.
The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom, 395
Enter the Baron's presence-room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies, 400
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame !

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale, 405
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ?

Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
And constancy lives in realms above ; 410
And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
And to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline. 415
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother :
They parted — ne'er to meet again !
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining — 420
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;
A dreary sea now flows between.
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween, 425
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face :
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again. 430

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage ;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side

He would proclaim it far and wide,
With trump and solemn heraldry, 435
That they, who thus had wronged the dame
Were base as spotted infamy !
' And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek 440
My tourney court — that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men !'
He spake : his eye in lightning rolls !
For the lady was ruthlessly seized ; and he
 kenned 445
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend !

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took
Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look. 450
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain !
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again —
(Ah, woe is me ! Was it for thee, 455
Thou gentle maid ! such sights to see ?)

Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,

And drew in her breath with a hissing sound :
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round, 460
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest, 465
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light !

With new surprise,
'What ails then my beloved child ?' 470
The Baron said — His daughter mild
Made answer, 'All will yet be well !'
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else : so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine, 475
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared she had offended
Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid !
And with such lowly tones she prayed 480
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.

‘Nay!

Nay, by my soul!’ said Leoline.

‘Ho! Bracy the bard, the charge be thine!

Go thou, with music sweet and loud, 485

And take two steeds with trappings proud,

And take the youth whom thou lov’st best

To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,

And clothe you both in solemn vest,

And over the mountains haste along, 490

Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,

Detain you on the valley road.

‘And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,

My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes

Up Knorren Moor, through Halegarth Wood, 495

And reaches soon that castle good

Which stands and threatens Scotland’s wastes.

‘Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are
fleet,

Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses’ echoing feet! 500

And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,

Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!

Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free —

Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.

He bids thee come without delay 505

With all thy numerous array;

And take thy lovely daughter home :
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array
White with their panting palfreys' foam : 510
And, by mine honour ! I will say,
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine ! —
— For since that evil hour hath flown, 515
Many a summer's sun hath shone ;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine.'

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing ; 520
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing ;
' Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my harp can tell ;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee, 525
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me ;
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warn'd by a vision in my rest ! 530
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name —

Sir Leoline ! I saw the same,
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan, 535
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wonder'd what might ail the bird ;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
old tree. 540

‘ And in my dream, methought, I went
To search out what might there be found ;
And what the sweet bird’s trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry 545
No cause for her distressful cry ;
But yet for her dear lady’s sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo ! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck. 550
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove’s its head it crouched ;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers !
I woke ; it was the midnight hour, 555
The clock was echoing in the tower ;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away —
It seems to live upon my eye !

And thence I vowed this self-same day 560
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there.'

Thus Bracy said: the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile; 565
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
' Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song, 570
Thy sire and I will crush the snake !'
He kissed her forehead as he spake,
And Geraldine in maiden wise
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine 575
She turned her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast, 580
And looked askance at Christabel ——
Jesu, Maria, shield her well !

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye, 585

And with somewhat of malice, and more of
dread,

At Christabel she look'd askance!—

One moment—and the sight was fled!

But Christabel in dizzy trance

Stumbling on the unsteady ground 590

Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;

And Geraldine again turned round,

And like a thing, that sought relief,

Full of wonder and full of grief,

She rolled her large bright eyes divine 595

Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,

She nothing sees—no sight but one!

The maid, devoid of guile and sin,

I know not how, in fearful wise, 600

So deeply had she drunken in

That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,

That all her features were resigned

To this sole image in her mind:

And passively did imitate 605

That look of dull and treacherous hate!

And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,

Still picturing that look askance

With forced unconscious sympathy

Full before her father's view—— 610

As far as such a look could be

In eyes so innocent and blue!

And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed :

Then falling at the Baron's feet, 615

' By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away ! '

She said : and more she could not say :

For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell. 620

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline ? thy only child

Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild ;

The same, for whom thy lady died ! 625

O, by the pangs of her dear mother

Think thou no evil of thy child !

For her, and thee, and for no other,

She prayed the moment ere she died :

Prayed that the babe for whom she died, 630

Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride !

That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline !

And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,

Her child and thine ? 635

Within the Baron's heart and brain

If thoughts, like these, had any share,

They only swelled his rage and pain,

And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage, 640
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild,
Dishonour'd thus in his old age;
Dishonour'd by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the insulted daughter of his friend 645
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end —
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere — 650
'Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence!' The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine! 655

THE CONCLUSION

TO PART THE SECOND

A little child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight 660
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast

Upon his heart, that he at last
 Must needs express his love's excess
 With words of unmeant bitterness. 665
 Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
 Thoughts so all unlike each other ;
 To mutter and mock a broken charm,
 To dally with wrong that does no harm.
 Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty 670
 At each wild word to feel within
 A sweet recoil of love and pity.
 And what, if in a world of sin
 (O sorrow and shame should this be true !)
 Such giddiness of heart and brain 675
 Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
 So talks as it's most used to do.

1798-1825

ENCINCTURED with a twine of leaves,
 That leafy twine his only dress !
 A lovely Boy was plucking fruits,
 By moonlight, in a wilderness.
 The moon was bright, the air was free, 5
 And fruits and flowers together grew
 On many a shrub and many a tree :
 And all put on a gentle hue,
 Hanging in the shadowy air
 Like a picture rich and rare. 10

It was a climate where, they say,
The night is more belov'd than day.
But who that beauteous Boy beguil'd,
That beauteous Boy to linger here?
Alone, by night, a little child, 15
In place so silent and so wild —
Has he no friend, no loving mother near?

FRANCE: AN ODE

1798-1798

I

YE Clouds ! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may controul !
Ye Ocean-Waves ! that, wheresoe'er ye
roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws !
Ye Woods ! that listen to the night-birds' singing, 5
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind !
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod, 10
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,

My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I
wound,

Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable
sound!

O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high ! 15

And O ye Clouds that far above me soared !

Thou rising Sun ! thou blue rejoicing Sky !

Yea, every thing that is and will be free !

Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,

With what deep worship I have still adored 20

The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth,
and sea,

Stamped her strong foot and said she would
be free,

Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared ! 25

With what a joy my lofty gratulation

Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band :

And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,

Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,

The Monarchs marched in evil day, 30

And Britain join'd the dire array ;

Though dear her shores and circling ocean,

Though many friendships, many youthful loves

Had swoln the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and
 groves ; 35
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delay'd and vain retreat !
For ne'er, O Liberty ! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame ; 40
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III

' And what,' I said, ' though Blasphemy's loud
 scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove !
Though all the fierce and drunken passions
 wove 45
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's
 dream !
Ye storms, that round the dawning east as-
sembled,
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light !'
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and
 trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calm and
 bright ; 50
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory ;

When, insupportably advancing,
 Her arm made mockery of the warrior's
 ramp ;
 While timid looks of fury glancing, 55
 Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal
 stamp,
 Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore ;
 Then I reproached my fears that would not
 flee ;
 ' And soon,' I said, ' shall Wisdom teach her
 lore
 In the low huts of them that toil and groan ! 60
 And, conquering by her happiness alone,
 Shall France compel the nations to be free,
 Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth
 their own.'

IV

Forgive me, Freedom ! O forgive those dreams !
 I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament, 65
 From bleak Helvetia's icy caverns sent —
 I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams !
 Heroes, that for your peaceful country per-
 ished,
 And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
 With bleeding wounds ; forgive me, that I
 cherished 70
 One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes !

To scatter rage and traitorous guilt
Where Peace her jealous home had built ;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear ; 75
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the moun-
taineer —
O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous,
blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils !
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind ? 80
To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey ;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn ; to tempt and to betray ?

v

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain, 85
Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad
game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain !
O Liberty ! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour ; 90
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor
ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,

(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
 Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions, 95
 And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
 Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
 The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of
 the waves !
 And there I felt thee ! — on that sea-cliff's
 verge,
 Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze
 above, 100
 Had made one murmur with the distant surge !
 Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
 And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
 Possessing all things with intensest love,
 O Liberty ! my spirit felt thee there. 105

FROST AT MIDNIGHT

1798-1798

THE Frost performs its secret ministry,
 Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
 Came loud — and hark, again ! loud as before.
 The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
 Have left me to that solitude, which suits 5
 Abstruser musings : save that at my side
 My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
 'Tis calm indeed ! so calm, that it disturbs
 And vexes meditation with its strange

And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood, 10
This populous village ! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings-on of life,
Inaudible as dreams ! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not ;
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate, 15
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit 20
By its own moods interprets, every where
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O ! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars, 25
To watch that fluttering *stranger* ! and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-
tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day, 30
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come !
So gazed I, till the soothing things, I dreamt,

Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my
dreams ! 35
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book :
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up, 40
For still I hoped to see the *stranger's* face,
Townsmen, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My play-mate when we both were clothed
alike !

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep
calm, 45
Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought !
My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore, 50
And in far other scenes ! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But *thou*, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags 55
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and
shores

And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God 60
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher ! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee, 65
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eave-
drops fall 70
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE

WRITTEN IN APRIL 1798, DURING THE
ALARM OF AN INVASION

1798-1798

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell ! O'er stiller place
No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.

The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on, 5
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely: but the
dell,

Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at
eve, 10

The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly
he,

The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made 15
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
And from the sun, and from the breezy air, 20
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of Nature!
And so, his senses gradually wrapt 25
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing lark;
That singest like an angel in the clouds!

My God ! it is a melancholy thing
For such a man, who would full fain preserve 30
His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
For all his human brethren — O my God !
It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
What uproar and what strife may now be
stirring

This way or that way o'er these silent hills — 35
Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
And all the crash of onset ; fear and rage,
And undetermined conflict — even now,
Even now, perchance, and in his native isle :
Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun ! 40
We have offended, Oh ! my countrymen !
We have offended very grievously,
And been most tyrannous. From east to west
A groan of accusation pierces Heaven !
The wretched plead against us ; multitudes 45
Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
Our brethren ! Like a cloud that travels on,
Steam'd up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
Even so, my countrymen ! have we gone forth
And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs, 50
And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
With slow perdition murders the whole man,
His body and his soul ! Meanwhile, at home,
All individual dignity and power
Engulf'd in Courts, Committees, Institutions, 55

Associations and Societies,
A vain, speech - mouthing, speech - reporting
Guild,
One Benefit-Club for mutual flattery,
We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth ; 60
Contemptuous of all honourable rule,
Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
For gold, as at a market ! The sweet words
Of Christian promise, words that even yet
Might stem destruction, were they wisely
preached, 65
Are muttered o'er by men, whose tones pro-
claim
How flat and wearisome they feel their trade :
Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
To deem them falsehoods or to know their
truth.
Oh ! blasphemous ! the book of life is made 70
A superstitious instrument, on which
We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break ;
For all must swear — all and in every place,
College and wharf, council and justice-court ;
All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed, 75
Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
The rich, the poor, the old man and the young ;
All, all make up one scheme of perjury,
That faith doth reel ; the very name of God

Sounds like a juggler's charm ; and, bold with
joy, 80
Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
(Portentous sight !) the owlet Atheism,
Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them
close,
And hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven, 85
Cries out, ' Where is it ? '

Thankless too for peace,
(Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous
seas)
Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war !
Alas ! for ages ignorant of all 90
Its ghastlier workings, (famine or blue plague,
Battle, or siege, or flight through wintry snows,)
We, this whole people, have been clamorous
For war and bloodshed ; animating sports,
The which we pay for as a thing to talk of, 95
Spectators and not combatants ! No guess
Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
No speculation on contingency,
However dim and vague, too vague and dim
To yield a justifying cause ; and forth, 100
(Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)

We send our mandates for the certain death
Of thousands and ten thousands ! Boys and
girls,
And women, that would groan to see a child 105
Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
The best amusement for our morning meal !
The poor wretch, who has learnt his only
prayers
From curses, who knows scarcely words
enough
To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father, 110
Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
And technical in victories and defeats,
And all our dainty terms for fratricide ;
Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our
tongues
Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
We join no feeling and attach no form ! 116
As if the soldier died without a wound ;
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang ; as if the wretch,
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds, 120
Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed ;
As though he had no wife to pine for him,
No God to judge him ! Therefore, evil days
Are coming on us, O my countrymen !
And what if all-avenging Providence, 125
Strong and retributive, should make us know

The meaning of our words, force us to feel
The desolation and the agony
Of our fierce doings?

Spare us yet awhile,

Father and God! O! spare us yet awhile! 130
Oh! let not English women drag their flight
Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
Laughed at the breast! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms 135
Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,
And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves
pure!
Stand forth! be men! repel an impious foe,
Impious and false, a light yet cruel race, 140
Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
With deeds of murder; and still promising
Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes 145
And all that lifts the spirit! Stand we forth;
Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
And let them toss as idly on its waves
As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-blast

Swept from our shores! And oh! may we
return 150
Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
So fierce a foe to frenzy!

I have told,
O Britons! O my brethren! I have told
Most bitter truth, but without bitterness. 155
Nor deem my zeal or factious or mistimed;
For never can true courage dwell with them,
Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not
look
At their own vices. We have been too long
Dupes of a deep delusion! Some, belike, 160
Groaning with restless enmity, expect
All change from change of constituted power;
As if a Government had been a robe,
On which our vice and wretchedness were
tagged
Like fancy-points and fringes, with the robe 165
Pulled off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
A radical causation to a few
Poor drudges of chastising Providence,
Who borrow all their hues and qualities
From our own folly and rank wickedness, 170
Which gave them birth and nursed them.
Others, meanwhile,

Dote with a mad idolatry ; and all
 Who will not fall before their images,
 And yield them worship, they are enemies
 Even of their country !

Such have I been deemed. — 175

But, O dear Britain ! O my Mother Isle !
 Needs must thou prove a name most dear and
 holy

To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
 A husband, and a father ! who revere
 All bonds of natural love, and find them all 180
 Within the limits of thy rocky shores.

O native Britain ! O my Mother Isle !
 How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear
 and holy

To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
 Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
 Have drunk in all my intellectual life, 186

All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
 All adoration of the God in nature,
 All lovely and all honourable things,
 Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel 190

The joy and greatness of its future being ?
 There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
 Unborrowed from my country ! O divine
 And beauteous island ! thou hast been my sole
 And most magnificent temple, in the which 195

I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me ! —

May my fears,

My filial fears, be vain ! and may the vaunts
And menace of the vengeful enemy
Pass like the gust, that roared and died away 200
In the distant tree : which heard, and only
heard
In this low dell, bow'd not the delicate grass.

But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze :
The light has left the summit of the hill, 205
Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
Farewell, awhile, O soft and silent spot !
On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
Homeward I wind my way ; and lo ! recalled 210
From bodings that have well-nigh wearied me,
I find myself upon the brow, and pause
Startled ! And after lonely sojourning
In such a quiet and surrounded nook,
This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
Dim-tinted, there the mighty majesty 216
Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
And elmy fields, seems like society —
Conversing with the mind, and giving it

A livelier impulse and a dance of thought ! 220
And now, beloved Stowey ! I behold
Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four huge
 elms
Clustering, which mark the mansion of my
 friend ;
And close behind them, hidden from my view,
Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe 225
And my babe's mother dwell in peace ! With
 light
And quickened footsteps thitherward I tend,
Remembering thee, O green and silent dell !
And grateful, that by nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart 230
Is soften'd, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human
 kind.

THE NIGHTINGALE

A CONVERSATION POEM, WRITTEN IN

APRIL 1798

1798-1798

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge !
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath, 5

But hear no murmuring : it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night ! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars. 11
And hark ! the Nightingale begins its song,
' Most musical, most melancholy ' bird !
A melancholy bird ? Oh ! idle thought !
In Nature there is nothing melancholy. 15
But some night-wandering man whose heart
was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch ! fill'd all things with
himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale 20
Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit ;
Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretched his
limbs 25
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful ! so his fame 30

Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing ! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature ! But 'twill not be so ;
And youths and maidens most poetical, 35
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister ! we have
learnt 40
A different lore : we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance ! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes, 45
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music !

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge, 50
Which the great lord inhabits not ; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the
paths.

But never elsewhere in one place I knew 55
So many nightingales ; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's songs,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug, 60
And one low piping sound more sweet than
all —

Stirring the air with such an harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might
almost

Forget it was not day ! On moonlight bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half-disclosed, 65
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright
and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the
shade

Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home 70
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways ; she knows all
their notes,
That gentle Maid ! and oft, a moment's space, 75

What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and those wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy, 80
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perch giddily
On blossomy twig still swinging from the
breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song 85
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you, my friends! farewell, a short fare-
well!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes. — That strain
again! 90
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up, 95
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's play-mate. He knows
well
The evening-star; and once, when he awoke

In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's
dream), 100
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped
tears,
Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam ! Well ! —
It is a father's tale : But if that Heaven 106
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow
up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy. — Once more, farewell,
Sweet Nightingale ! once more, my friends !
farewell.

WESTPHALIAN SONG

1799?—?

[The following is an almost literal translation of a very old and very favourite song among the Westphalian Boors. The turn at the end is the same with one of Mr. Dibdin's excellent songs, and the air to which it is sung by the Boors is remarkably sweet and lively.]

WHEN thou to my true-love com'st
Greet her from me kindly ;
When she asks thee how I fare ?
Say, folks in Heaven fair finely.

When she asks, 'What! Is he sick?' 5
 Say, dead! — and when for sorrow
 She begins to sob and cry,
 Say, I come to-morrow.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS

IMITATED FROM SCHILLER

1799?—1817

NEVER, believe me,
 Appear the Immortals,
 Never alone:

Scarce had I welcomed the Sorrow-beguiler,
 Iacchus! but in came Boy Cupid the Smiler; 5
 Lo! Phœbus the Glorious descends from his
 throne!

They advance, they float in, the Olympians all!
 With Divinities fills my
 Terrestrial hall!

How shall I yield you 10
 Due entertainment,
 Celestial quire?

Me rather, bright guests! with your wings of
 upbuoyance
 Bear aloft to your homes, to your banquets of
 joyance,
 That the roofs of Olympus may echo my lyre! 15

Hah ! we mount ! on their pinions they waft up
my soul !

O give me the nectar !
O fill me the bowl !

Give him the nectar !
Pour out for the poet,
Hebe ! pour free !

20

Quicken his eyes with celestial dew,
That Styx the detested no more he may view,
And like one of us Gods may conceit him to be !
Thanks, Hebe ! I quaff it ! Io Pæan, I cry ! 25
The wine of the Immortals
Forbids me to die !

NAMES

[FROM LESSING]

1799-1799

I ASK'D my fair one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay ;
By what sweet name from Rome or Greece ;
Lalage, Neæra, Chloris,
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris, 5
Arethusa or Lucrece.

‘ Ah ! ’ replied my gentle fair,
‘ Beloved, what are names but air ?

Choose thou whatever suits the line ;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris, 10
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only, only call me Thine.'

WATER BALLAD

1799? - 1831

' COME hither, gently rowing,
Come, bear me quickly o'er
This stream so brightly flowing
To yonder woodland shore.
But vain were my endeavour 5
To pay thee, courteous guide ;
Row on, row on, for ever
I'd have thee by my side.

' Good boatman, prithee haste thee,
I seek my father-land.' — 10
' Say, when I there have placed thee,
Dare I demand thy hand ? '
' A maiden's head can never
So hard a point decide ;
Row on, row on, for ever 15
I'd have thee by my side.'

The happy bridal over
The wanderer ceased to roam,
For, seated by her lover,

The boat became her home.
 And still they sang together
 As steering o'er the tide :
 ' Row on through wind and weather
 For ever by my side.'

20

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE,
 IN THE HARTZ FOREST

1799-1799

I STOOD on Brocken's sovran height, and saw
 Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,
 A surging scene, and only limited
 By the blue distance. Heavily my way
 Downward I dragged through fir-groves ever-
 more,

5

Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral
 forms

Speckled with sunshine ; and, but seldom heard,
 The sweet bird's song became an hollow
 sound ;

And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
 Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct
 From many a note of many a waterfall,
 And the brook's chatter ; 'mid whose islet-
 stones

10

The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat
Sat, his white beard slow waving. I moved
on 15
In low and languid mood : for I had found
That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the Life within ; —
Fair cyphers else : fair, but of import vague
Or unconcerning, where the heart not finds 20
History or prophecy of friend, or child,
Or gentle maid, our first and early love,
Or father, or the venerable name
Of our adored country ! O thou Queen,
Thou delegated Deity of Earth, 25
O dear, dear England ! how my longing eye
Turned westward, shaping in the steady clouds
Thy sands and high white cliffs !

My native Land !
Filled with the thought of thee this heart was
proud,
Yea, mine eye swam with tears : that all the
view 30
From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
Floated away, like a departing dream,
Feeble and dim ! Stranger, these impulses
Blame thou not lightly ; nor will I profane,
With hasty judgment or injurious doubt, 35

That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
That God is everywhere! the God who framed
Mankind to be one mighty family,
Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL

WRITTEN IN GERMANY

1799-1800

If I had but two little wings
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things, 5
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I? 10
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids:
So I love to wake ere break of day:
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

THE DAY-DREAM

FROM AN EMIGRANT TO HIS ABSENT WIFE

1799-1802

If thou wert here, these tears were tears of
light!

But from as sweet a vision did I start
As ever made these eyes grow idly bright!

And though I weep, yet still around my heart
A sweet and playful tenderness doth linger, 5
Touching my heart as with an infant's finger.

My mouth half open, like a witless man,
I saw our couch, I saw our quiet room,
Its shadows heaving by the fire-light gloom ;
And o'er my lips a subtle feeling ran, 10
All o'er my lips a soft and breeze-like feeling —
I know not what — but had the same been
stealing

Upon a sleeping mother's lips, I guess
It would have made the loving mother dream
That she was softly bending down to kiss 15
Her babe, that something more than babe did
seem,

A floating presence of its darling father,
And yet its own dear baby self far rather!

Across my chest there lay a weight, so warm !
 As if some bird had taken shelter there ; 20
 And lo ! I seem'd to see a woman's form —
 Thine, Sara, thine ? O joy, if thine it were !
 I gazed with stifled breath, and fear'd to stir it,
 No deeper trance e'er wrapt a yearning spirit !

And now, when I seem'd sure thy face to see, 25
 Thy own dear self in our own quiet home ;
 There came an elfish laugh, and waken'd me :
 'Twas Frederic, who behind my chair had
 clomb,
 And with his bright eyes at my face was peep-
 ing.
 I bless'd him, tried to laugh, and fell a-weeping !

LOVE

1799-1799

ALL thoughts, all passions, all delights,
 Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
 All are but ministers of Love,
 And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I 5
 Live o'er again that happy hour,
 When midway on the mount I lay,
 Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene
 Had blended with the lights of eve; 10
 And she was there, my hope, my joy,
 My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,
 The statue of the armed knight;
 She stood and listened to my lay, 15
 Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own.
 My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
 She loves me best, whene'er I sing
 The songs that make her grieve. 20

I played a soft and doleful air,
 I sang an old and moving story —
 An old rude song, that suited well
 That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush, 25
 With downcast eyes and modest grace;
 For well she knew, I could not choose
 But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
 Upon his shield a burning brand; 30
 And that for ten long years he wooed
 The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined : and ah !
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love, 35
 Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace
And she forgave me, that I gazed
 Too fondly on her face ! 40

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
 Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den, 45
And sometimes from the darksome shade
And sometimes starting up at once
 In green and sunny glade, —

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright ; 50
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
 This miserable Knight !

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death 55
 The Lady of the Land !

And how she wept, and clasped his knees ;
And how she tended him in vain —
And ever strove to expiate
 The scorn that crazed his brain ; — 60

And that she nursed him in a cave ;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
 A dying man he lay ; —

His dying words — but when I reached 65
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
 Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ; 70
The music and the doleful tale,
 The rich and balmy eve ;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued, 75
 Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin-shame ;
And like the murmur of a dream,
 I heard her breathe my name. 80

Her bosom heaved — she stepped aside,
 As conscious of my look she stepped —
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye
 She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms, 85
 She pressed me with a meek embrace;
 And bending back her head, looked up,
 And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
 And partly 'twas a bashful art, 90
 That I might rather feel, than see,
 The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
 And told her love with virgin pride;
 And so I won my Genevieve, 95
 My bright and beauteous Bride.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE

A FRAGMENT

1799-1834

BENEATH yon birch with silver bark,
 And boughs so pendulous and fair,
 The brook falls scatter'd down the rock:
 And all is mossy there!

And there upon the moss she sits, 5
The Dark Ladié in silent pain ;
The heavy tear is in her eye,
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page
Up the castled mountain's breast, 10
If he might find the Knight that wears
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,
And she had linger'd there all day,
Counting moments, dreaming fears— 15
Oh wherefore can he stay ?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,
She sees far off a swinging bough !
'Tis He ! 'Tis my betrothed Knight !
Lord Falkland, it is Thou !' 20

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,
She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,
Her kisses glowing on his cheeks
She quenches with her tears.

.

' My friends with rude ungentle words 25
They scoff and bid me fly to thee !

O give me shelter in thy breast !
O shield and shelter me !

‘ My Henry, I have given thee much,
I gave what I can ne’er recall, 30
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,
O Heaven ! I gave thee all.’

The Knight made answer to the Maid,
While to his heart he held her hand,
‘ Nine castles hath my noble sire, 35
None statelier in the land.

‘ The fairest one shall be my love’s,
The fairest castle of the nine !
Wait only till the stars peep out,
The fairest shall be thine : 40

‘ Wait only till the hand of eve
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,
And through the dark we two will steal
Beneath the twinkling stars ! ’ —

‘ The dark ? the dark ? No ! not the 45
dark ?
The twinkling stars ? How, Henry ? How ?
O God ! ’twas in the eye of noon
He pledged his sacred vow !

‘ And in the eye of noon my love
 Shall lead me from my mother’s door, 50
 Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white
 Strewing flowers before :

‘ But first the nodding minstrels go
 With music meet for lordly bowers,
 The children next in snow-white vests, 55
 Strewing buds and flowers !

‘ And then my love and I shall pace,
 My jet black hair in pearly braids,
 Between our comely bachelors
 And blushing bridal maids.’ 60

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A CHRISTMAS CAROL

1799-1799

I

THE shepherds went their hasty way,
 And found the lowly stable-shed
 Where the Virgin-Mother lay :
 And now they checked their eager tread,
 For to the Babe, that at her bosom clung, 5
 A Mother’s song the Virgin-Mother sung.

II

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night !
While sweeter than a mother's song, 10
Blest Angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high ! and Peace on Earth.

III

She listened to the tale divine,
And closer still the Babe she pressed ;
And while she cried, the Babe is mine ! 15
The milk rushed faster to her breast :
Joy rose within her, like a summer's morn ;
Peace, Peace on Earth ! the Prince of Peace is
born.

IV

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate ! 20
That strife should vanish, battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate ?
Sweet Music's loudest note, the Poet's story, ——
Didst thou ne'er love to hear of fame and glory ?

V

And is not War a youthful king, 25
A stately hero clad in mail ?

Beneath his footsteps laurels spring ;
 Him Earth's majestic monarchs hail
 Their friend, their playmate ! and his bold
 bright eye
 Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh. 30

VI

' Tell this in some more courtly scene,
 To maids and youths in robes of state !
 I am a woman poor and mean,
 And therefore is my soul elate.
 War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled, 35
 That from the aged father tears his child !

VII

' A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
 He kills the sire and starves the son ;
 The husband kills, and from her board
 Steals all his widow's toil had won ; 40
 Plunders God's world of beauty ; rends away
 All safety from the night, all comfort from the
 day.

VIII

' Then wisely is my soul elate,
 That strife should vanish, battle cease :
 I'm poor and of a low estate, 45
 The Mother of the Prince of Peace.

Joy rises in me, like a summer's morn :
 Peace, Peace on Earth ! the Prince of Peace is
 born.'

THEKLA'S SONG

1800-1800

THE cloud doth gather, the green wood roar,
 The damsel paces along the shore ;
 The billows they tumble with might, with
 might ;
 And she flings out her voice to the darksome
 night ;

Her bosom is swelling with sorrow ;
 The world it is empty, the heart will die,
 There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky :
 Thou Holy One, call thy child away !
 I've lived and loved, and that was to-day —
 Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.

5

THE KEEPSAKE

1800-1802

THE tedded hay, the first fruits of the soil,
 The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
 Show summer gone, ere come. The foxglove
 tall
 Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,

Or when it bends beneath the up-springing
lark, 5
Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
(In vain the darling of successful love)
Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
Nor can I find, amid my lonely walk 10
By rivulet, or spring, or wet roadside,
That blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook,
Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not!
So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk 15
Has worked (the flowers which most she knew
I loved),
And, more beloved than they, her auburn hair.

In the cool morning twilight, early waked
By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
Softly she rose, and lightly stole along, 20
Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning
breeze,
Over their dim fast-moving shadows hung,
Making a quiet image of disquiet
In the smooth, scarcely moving river-pool. 25
There, in that bower where first she owned her
love,
And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy

From off her glowing cheek, she sate and
stretched

The silk upon the frame, and worked her name
Between the Moss-Rose and Forget-me-not — 30
Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair!
That forced to wander till sweet spring return,
I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
Her voice (that even in her mirthful mood
Has made me wish to steal away and weep), 35
Nor yet the entrancement of that maiden kiss
With which she promised, that when spring
returned,

She would resign one half of that dear name,
And own thenceforth no other name but mine!

A STRANGER MINSTREL

[WRITTEN TO MRS. ROBINSON, A FEW WEEKS
BEFORE HER DEATH]

1800-1831

As late on Skiddaw's mount I lay supine,
Midway th' ascent, in that repose divine
When the soul centred in the heart's recess
Hath quaff'd its fill of Nature's loveliness,
Yet still beside the fountain's marge will stay 5
And fain would thirst again, again to quaff;
Then when the tear, slow travelling on its way,
Fills up the wrinkles of a silent laugh —

In that sweet mood of sad and humorous
thought

A form within me rose, within me wrought 10

With such strong magic, that I cried aloud,

‘Thou ancient Skiddaw by thy helm of cloud,

And by thy many-colour’d chasms deep,

And by their shadows that for ever sleep,

By yon small flaky mists that love to creep 15

Along the edges of those spots of light,

Those sunny islands on thy smooth green
height,

And by yon shepherds with their sheep,

And dogs and boys, a gladsome crowd,

That rush even now with clamour loud 20

Sudden from forth thy topmost cloud,

And by this laugh, and by this tear,

I would, old Skiddaw, she were here !

A lady of sweet song is she,

Her soft blue eye was made for thee ! 25

O ancient Skiddaw, by this tear,

I would, I would that she were here !’

Then ancient Skiddaw, stern and proud,

In sullen majesty replying,

Thus spake from out his helm of cloud 30

(His voice was like an echo dying !): —

‘She dwells belike in scenes more fair,

And scorns a mount so bleak and bare.’

I only sigh'd when this I heard,
Such mournful thoughts within me stirr'd 35
That all my heart was faint and weak,
So sorely was I troubled !
No laughter wrinkled on my cheek,
But O the tears were doubled !
But ancient Skiddaw green and high 40
Heard and understood my sigh ;
And now, in tones less stern and rude,
As if he wish'd to end the feud,
Spake he, the proud response renewing
(His voice was like a monarch wooing) : — 45
'Nay, but thou dost not know her might,
The pinions of her soul how strong !
But many a stranger in my height
Hath sung to me her magic song,
Sending forth his ecstasy 50
In her divinest melody,
And hence I know her soul is free,
She is where'er she wills to be,
Unfetter'd by mortality !
Now to the " haunted-beach " can fly, 55
Beside the threshold scourged with waves,
Now where the maniac wildly raves,
" *Pale moon, thou spectre of the sky !* "
No wind that hurries o'er my height
Can travel with so swift a flight. 60
I too, methinks, might merit

The presence of her spirit !
To me too might belong
The honour of her song and witching melody,
Which most resembles me, 65
Soft, various, and sublime,
Exempt from wrongs of Time !'

Thus spake the mighty Mount, and I
Made answer, with a deep-drawn sigh : —
' Thou ancient Skiddaw, by this tear, 70
I would, I would that she were here !'

THE SNOW-DROP

[A FRAGMENT]

1800 ?—1833

I

FEAR thou no more, thou timid Flower !
Fear thou no more the winter's might,
The whelming thaw, the ponderous shower,
The silence of the freezing night !
Since Laura murmur'd o'er thy leaves 5
The potent sorceries of song,
To thee, meek Flowret ! gentler gales
And cloudless skies belong.

2

Her eye with tearful meanings fraught,
My fancy saw her gaze on thee : 10
Interpreting the spirit's thought,
The spirit's eager sympathy,
Now trembled with thy trembling stem
And while thou droopedst o'er thy bed
With sweet unconscious sympathy 15
Inclin'd the drooping head.

3

She droop'd her head, she stretch'd her arm,
She whisper'd low her witching rhymes,
Fame unreluctant heard the charm,
And bore thee to Pierian climes ! 20
Fear thou no more the Matin Frost
That sparkled on thy bed of snow :
For there, mid laurels ever green,
Immortal thou shalt blow.

4

Thy petals boast a white more soft, 25
The spell hath so perfumed thee,
That careless Love shall deem thee oft
A blossom from his Myrtle tree.
Then laughing o'er the fair deceit
Shall race with some Etesian wind 30

To seek the woven arboret
Where Laura lies reclin'd.

5

All them whom Love and Fancy grace,
When grosser eyes are clos'd in sleep,
The gentle spirits of the place 35
Waft up the insuperable steep,
On whose vast summit broad and smooth
Her nest the Phœnix Bird conceals,
And where by cypresses o'erhung
The heavenly Lethe steals. 40

6

A sea-like sound the branches breathe,
Stirr'd by the Breeze that loiters there ;
And all that stretch their limbs beneath,
Forget the coil of mortal care.
Strange mists along the margins rise, 45
To heal the guests who thither come,
And fit the soul to re-endure
Its earthly martyrdom.

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY

1801-1801

TRANQUILLITY ! thou better name
Than all the family of Fame !

Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage ;
For oh ! dear child of thoughtful Truth, 5
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the steadfast shore,
Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its
 roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, Power divine, 10
Thy spirit rests ! Satiety
And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle Hope
And dire Remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind : 15
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks be-
 hind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through the accustomed mead ;
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat ; 20
And when the gust of Autumn crowds,
And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,
Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart
 attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding
 moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul, 25
 To thee I dedicate the whole !
 And while within myself I trace
 The greatness of some future race,
 Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
 The present works of present man — 30
 A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
 Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile !

DEJECTION : AN ODE

WRITTEN APRIL 4, 1802

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
 With the old Moon in her arms ;
 And I fear, I fear, my Master dear !
 We shall have a deadly storm.

Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I

WELL ! If the Bard was weather-wise, who
 made
 The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
 This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
 Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
 Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes, 5
 Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
 Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
 Which better far were mute.
 For lo ! the New-moon winter-bright !

And overspread with phantom light, 10
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming-on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling, 15
And the slant night-shower driving loud and
fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst
they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move
and live! 20

II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear —
O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood, 25
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye! 30
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;

Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always
seen :

Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew 35
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue ;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are !

III

My genial spirits fail ;
And what can these avail 40
To lift the smothering weight from off my
breast ?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west :
I may not hope from outward forms to win 45
The passion and the life, whose fountains are
within.

IV

O Lady ! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live :
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud !
And would we aught behold, of higher worth, 50
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah ! from the soul itself must issue forth

A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
 Enveloping the Earth — 55
And from the soul itself must there be sent
 A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element !

v

O pure of heart ! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be ! 60
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.

 Joy, virtuous Lady ! Joy that ne'er was
 given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour, 65
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and
 shower,

Joy, Lady ! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
 A new Earth and new Heaven.

Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud — 70
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous
 cloud—

 We in ourselves rejoice !
And thence flows all that charms or ear or
 sight,
 All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light. 75

VI

There was a time when, though my path was
rough,

This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff

Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness :
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine, 80
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed
mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth :
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth ;

But oh ! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth, 85
My shaping spirit of Imagination.

For not to think of what I needs must feel,

But to be still and patient, all I can ;
And haply by abstruse research to steal

From my own nature all the natural man — 90

This was my sole resource, my only plan :
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream ! 95

I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a
scream

Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth ! Thou Wind, that rav'st
without,

Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb, 101
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,

Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist ! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry
song, 106

The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves
among.

Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds !
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold !

What tell'st thou now about ? 110

'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting
wounds —

At once they groan with pain, and shudder
with the cold !

But hush ! there is a pause of deepest silence !

And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd, 115
With groans, and tremulous shudderings — all
is over —

It tells another tale, with sounds less deep
and loud !

A tale of less affright,

And tempered with delight,
 As Otway's self had framed the tender lay, 120
 'Tis of a little child
 Upon a lonesome wild,
 Not far from home, but she hath lost her
 way:
 And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
 And now screams loud, and hopes to make her
 mother hear. 125

VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of
 sleep:
 Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
 Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
 And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
 May all the stars hang bright above her dwell-
 ing, 130
 Silent as though they watched the sleeping
 Earth!
 With light heart may she rise,
 Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
 Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
 To her may all things live, from pole to pole, 135
 Their life the eddying of her living soul!
 O simple spirit, guided from above,
 Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
 Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

THE PICTURE

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION

1802-1802

THROUGH weeds and thorns, and matted under-
wood

I force my way ; now climb, and now descend
O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
Crushing the purple whorts ; while oft unseen,
Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves, 5
The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil,
I know not, ask not whither ! A new joy,
Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
Beckons me on, or follows from behind, 10
Playmate, or guide ! The master-passion
quelled,

I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
Soar up, and form a melancholy vault 15
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse ;
Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,
And of this busy human heart aweary,
Worships the spirit of unconscious life 20
In tree or wild-flower. — Gentle lunatic !

If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that he is ;
But would be something that he knows not of,
In winds or waters, or among the rocks ! 25

But hence, fond wretch ! breathe not conta-
gion here !

No myrtle-walks are these : these are no groves
Where Love dare loiter ! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall
gore

His dainty feet, the briar and the thorn 30
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded
bird

Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades !
And you, ye Earth-winds ! you that make at
morn

The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs ! 35
You, O ye wingless Airs ! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed —
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp, 40
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin
Gnomes !

With prickles sharper than his darts bemock

His little Godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's
back.

45

This is my hour of triumph! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine 50
Clothes as with net-work: here will couch my
limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world — unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook 55
That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze, that visits
me,
Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow, 60
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek;
Ne'er played the wanton — never half disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove 65
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze ! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song, 70
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream ! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look 75
Contemplative ! Behold ! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow ! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror ! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turned, or looked by
stealth 80

(For fear is true-love's cruel nurse), he now
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom-world on which he gazed,
But not unheeded gazed : for see, ah ! see, 86
The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells :
And suddenly, as one that toys with time, 90
Scatters them on the pool ! Then all the
charm

Is broken — all that phantom world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,

And each mis-shapes the other. Stay awhile,
 Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine
 eyes! 95

The stream will soon renew its smoothness,
 soon

The visions will return ! And lo ! he stays :
 And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
 Come trembling back, unite, and now once
 more

The pool becomes a mirror ; and behold 100
 Each wildflower on the marge inverted there,
 And there the half-uprooted tree — but where,
 O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned
 On its bare branch ? He turns, and she is
 gone !

Homeward she steals through many a woodland
 maze 105

Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth !
 Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
 In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
 Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and
 thou

Behold'st her shadow still abiding there, 110
 The Naiad of the mirror !

Not to thee,
 O wild and desert stream ! belongs this tale :
 Gloomy and dark art thou — the crowded
 firs

Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy
bed,

Making thee doleful as a cavern-well : 115

Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild
stream !

This be my chosen haunt — emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead, 120
Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo ! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound, 125
How soon to re-unite ! And see ! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found : and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye !
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds, 130
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre ! Such the hour
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds ;
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall !
I pass forth into light — I find myself 135
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
Of forest trees, the Lady of the Woods),
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock

That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
The landscape on my sight! Two crescent
hills

140

Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray, 145
Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.

How solemnly the pendent ivy-mass
Swings in its winnow: All the air is calm.
The smoke from cottage-chimneys, tinged with
light,

Rises in columns; from this house alone, 150
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is
this?

That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,
And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
His dear head pillow'd on a sleeping dog — 155
One arm between its fore-legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfilleted, and of unequal lengths.

A curious picture, with a master's haste
Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin, 160
Peeled from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!
Yon bark her canvas, and those purple berries
Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried

On the fine skin! She has been newly here;
And lo! yon patch of heath has been her
couch — 165

The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!
For this may'st thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!
Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids! 170
More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed,
The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart, 175
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-
wood

Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straight-
way

On to her father's house. She is alone!
The night draws on — such ways are hard to
hit —

And fit it is I should restore this sketch, 180
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I
yearn

To keep the relique? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste!
The picture in my hand which she has left;
She cannot blame me that I follow'd her: 185
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

HYMN BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE
VALE OF CHAMOUNI

1802-1802

Besides the Rivers, Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides ; and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers, with its 'flowers of loveliest blue.'

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to
pause

On thy bald awful head, O sovran BLANC !
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly ; but thou, most awful Form ! 5
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently ! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass : methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge ! But when I look again, 10
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity !
O dread and silent Mount ! I gazed upon
thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought : entranced in
prayer 15
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my
Thought,
Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy : 20
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing — there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven !

Awake, my soul ! not only passive praise
Thou owest ! not alone these swelling tears, 25
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy ! Awake,
Voice of sweet song ! Awake, my heart,
awake !
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovereign of the
Vale !
O struggling with the darkness all the night, 30
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they
sink :
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald : wake, O wake, and utter praise ! 35
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth ?
Who fill'd thy countenance with rosy light ?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams ?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad !
Who called you forth from night and utter death, 40
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever ?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your
joy, 45
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam ?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest ?

Ye Ice-falls ! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain — 50
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge !
Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !
Who made you glorious as the Gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon ? Who bade the sun 55
Clothe you with rainbows ? Who, with living
flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet ? —
God ! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer ! and let the ice-plains echo, God !
God ! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome
voice ! 60
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like
sounds !

And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, GOD !

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost !
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest ! 65
Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm !
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds !
Ye signs and wonders of the element !
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise !

Thou too, hoar Mount ! with thy sky-
pointing peaks, 70
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure
serene
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast —
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain ! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low 75
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me — Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth ! 80
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises GOD. 85

AN ODE TO THE RAIN

COMPOSED BEFORE DAYLIGHT, ON THE MORNING
APPOINTED FOR THE DEPARTURE OF A VERY
WORTHY, BUT NOT VERY PLEASANT VISITOR,
WHOM IT WAS FEARED THE RAIN MIGHT
DETAIN

1802-1802

I

I KNOW it is dark; and though I have lain,
Awake, as I guess, an hour or twain,
I have not once open'd the lids of my eyes,
But I lie in the dark, as a blind man lies.

O Rain! that I lie listening to,
You're but a doleful sound at best :

5

I owe you little thanks, 'tis true,
For breaking thus my needful rest !
Yet if, as soon as it is light,

O Rain! you will but take your flight,
I'll neither rail, nor malice keep,
Though sick and sore for want of sleep.

10

But only now, for this one day,
Do go, dear Rain! do go away!

II

O Rain! with your dull two-fold sound,
The clash hard by, and the murmur all round !

15

You know, if you know aught, that we,
Both night and day, but ill agree :
For days and months, and almost years,
Have limp'd on through this vale of tears, 20
Since body of mine, and rainy weather,
Have lived on easy terms together.

Yet if, as soon as it is light,
O Rain ! you will but take your flight,
Though you should come again to-morrow, 25
And bring with you both pain and sorrow ;
Though stomach should sicken and knees should
swell —

I'll nothing speak of you but well.
But only now for this one day,
Do go, dear Rain ! do go away ! 30

III

Dear Rain ! I ne'er refused to say
You're a good creature in your way ;
Nay, I could write a book myself,
Would fit a parson's lower shelf,
Showing how very good you are. — 35
What then ? sometimes it must be fair !
And if sometimes, why not to-day ?
Do go, dear Rain ! do go away !

IV

Dear Rain ! if I've been cold and shy,
Take no offence ! I'll tell you why. 40

A dear old Friend e'en now is here,
And with him came my sister dear ;
After long absence now first met,
Long months by pain and grief beset —
We three dear friends ! in truth, we groan 45
Impatiently to be alone.
We three, you mark ! and not one more !
The strong wish makes my spirit sore.
We have so much to talk about,
So many sad things to let out ; 50
So many tears in our eye-corners,
Sitting like little Jacky Horners —
In short, as soon as it is day,
Do go, dear Rain ! do go away.

v

And this I'll swear to you, dear Rain ! 55
Whenever you shall come again,
Be you as dull as e'er you could
(And by the bye 'tis understood,
You're not so pleasant as you're good),
Yet, knowing well your worth and place, 60
I'll welcome you with cheerful face ;
And though you stay'd a week or more,
Were ten times duller than before ;
Yet with kind heart, and right good will,
I'll sit and listen to you still ; 65
Nor should you go away, dear Rain !

Uninvited to remain.

But only now, for this one day,

Do go, dear Rain! do go away.

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH

1802-1802

THIS Sycamore, oft musical with bees, —
Such tents the Patriarchs loved! O long un-
harmed

May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting
stone

Keeps pure from falling leaves! Long may
the Spring,

5

Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a Fairy's Page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
Here twilight is and coolness: here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.

10

Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, Pilgrim, here! Here rest! and if thy
heart

15

Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
 Thy spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
 Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees !

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

1802-1802

Do you ask what the birds say ? The Sparrow,
 the Dove,
 The Linnet and Thrush say, ' I love and I
 love ! '

In the winter they're silent — the wind is so
 strong ;

What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud
 song.

But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny
 warm weather,

And singing, and loving — all come back to-
 gether.

[' I love, and I love, ' almost all the birds say
 From sunrise to star-rise, so gladsome are
 they !]

But the Lark is so brimful of gladness and
 love,

The green fields below him, the blue sky above, 10
 That he sings, and he sings ; and for ever sings
 he —

' I love my Love, and my Love loves me ! '

['Tis no wonder that he's full of joy to the
brim,
When he loves his Love, and his Love loves
him !]

THE PAINS OF SLEEP

1803-1817

ERE on my bed my limbs I lay,
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees ;
But silently, by slow degrees,
My spirit I to Love compose, 5
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
Only a *sense* of supplication ;
A sense o'er all my soul imprest 10
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, every where
Eternal Strength and Wisdom are.

But yester-night I pray'd aloud
In anguish and in agony, 15
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me :
A lurid light, a trampling throng,
Sense of intolerable wrong,

And whom I scorned, those only strong ! 20
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still !
Desire with loathing strangely mixed
On wild or hateful objects fixed.
Fantastic passions ! maddening brawl ! 25
And shame and terror over all !
Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
Which all confused I could not know
Whether I suffered, or I did :
For all seem'd guilt, remorse or woe, 30
My own or others still the same
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame !

So two nights passed : the night's dismay
Saddened and stunned the coming day.
Sleep, the wide blessing, seemed to me 35
Distemper's worst calamity.
The third night, when my own loud scream
Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
I wept as I had been a child ; 40
And having thus by tears subdued
My anguish to a milder mood,
Such punishments, I said, were due
To natures deepliest stained with sin :
For aye entempesting anew 45
The unfathomable hell within

The horror of their deeds to view,
 To know and loathe, yet wish and do!
 Such griefs with such men well agree,
 But wherefore, wherefore fall on me? 50
 To be beloved is all I need,
 And whom I love, I love indeed.

PHANTOM

1804-1834

ALL look and likeness caught from earth,
 All accident of kin and birth,
 Had pass'd away. There was no trace
 Of aught on that illumined face,
 Upraised beneath the rifted stone 5
 But of one spirit all her own; —
 She, she herself, and only she,
 Shone through her body visibly.

A SUNSET

1805-?

UPON the mountain's edge with light touch
 resting,
 There a brief while the globe of splendour sits
 And seems a creature of the earth, but soon,
 More changeful than the Moon,
 To wane fantastic his great orb submits, 5

Or cone or mow of fire : till sinking slowly
Even to a star at length he lessens wholly.

Abrupt, as Spirits vanish, he is sunk !
A soul-like breeze possesses all the wood.

The boughs, the sprays have stood
As motionless as stands the ancient trunk !
But every leaf through all the forest flutters,
And deep the cavern of the fountain mutters.

10

MS.

WHAT IS LIFE ?

1805-1829

RESEMBLES life what once was deem'd of light,
Too ample in itself for human sight ?

An absolute self — an element ungrounded —
All that we see, all colours of all shade

By encroach of darkness made ? —
Is very life by consciousness unbounded ?
And all the thoughts, pains, joys of mortal breath,
A war-embrace of wrestling life and death ?

5

CONSTANCY TO AN IDEAL OBJECT

1805 ?-1828

SINCE all that beat about in Nature's range,
Or veer or vanish ; why should'st thou remain

The only constant in a world of change,
 O yearning Thought ! that liv'st but in the brain ?
 Call to the Hours, that in the distance play, 5
 The faery people of the future day ——
 Fond Thought ! not one of all that shining swarm
 Will breathe on *thee* with life-enkindling breath,
 Till when, like strangers shelt'ring from a storm,
 Hope and Despair meet in the porch of Death ! 10
 Yet still thou haunt'st me ; and though well I see,
 She is not thou, and only thou art she,
 Still, still as though some dear *embodied* Good,
 Some *living* Love before my eyes there stood
 With answering look a ready ear to lend, 15
 I mourn to thee and say — ‘ Ah ! loveliest
 friend !

That this the meed of all my toils might be,
 To have a home, an English home, and thee ! ’
 Vain repetition ! Home and Thou are one.
 The peacefull'st cot, the moon shall shine upon, 20
 Lulled by the thrush and wakened by the lark,
 Without thee were but a becalmed bark,
 Whose helmsman on an ocean waste and wide
 Sits mute and pale his mouldering helm beside.

And art thou nothing ? Such thou art, as when 25
 The woodman winding westward up the glen
 At wintry dawn, where o'er the sheep-track's
 maze

The viewless snow-mist weaves a glist'ning
 haze,
 Sees full before him, gliding without tread,
 An image with a glory round its head ;
 The enamoured rustic worships its fair hues,
 Nor knows he *makes* the shadow, he pursues !

30

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE-TREE

1805-1828

A LAMENT

I seem to have an indistinct recollection of having read either in one of the ponderous tomes of George of Venice, or in some other compilation from the uninspired Hebrew writers, an apologue or Rabbinical tradition to the following purpose :

While our first parents stood before their offended Maker, and the last words of the sentence were yet sounding in Adam's ear, the guileful false serpent, a counterfeit and a usurper from the beginning, presumptuously took on himself the character of advocate or mediator, and pretending to intercede for Adam, exclaimed : ' Nay, Lord, in thy justice, not so ! for the man was the least in fault. Rather let the Woman return at once to the dust, and let Adam remain in this thy Paradise.' And the word of the Most High answered Satan : '*The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.* Treacherous Fiend ! if with guilt like thine, it had been possible for thee to have the heart of a Man, and to feel the yearning of a human soul for its counterpart, the sentence, which thou now counselest, should have been inflicted on thyself.'

The title of the following poem was suggested by a fact mentioned by Linnæus, of a date-tree in a nobleman's garden which year after year had put forth a full show of blossoms, but never produced fruit, till a branch from another date-tree had been conveyed from a distance of some hundred leagues. The first leaf of the MS.

from which the poem has been transcribed, and which contained the two or three introductory stanzas, is wanting : and the author has in vain taxed his memory to repair the loss. But a rude draught of the poem contains the substance of the stanzas, and the reader is requested to receive it as the substitute. It is not impossible, that some congenial spirit, whose years do not exceed those of the Author at the time the poem was written, may find a pleasure in restoring the Lament to its original integrity by a reduction of the thoughts to the requisite metre.

S. T. C.

I

BENEATH the blaze of a tropical sun the mountain peaks are the Thrones of Frost, through the absence of objects to reflect the rays. ‘What no one with us shares, seems scarce our own.’
The presence of a ONE, 5

The best belov’d, who loveth me the best,

is for the heart, what the supporting air from within is for the hollow globe with its suspended car. Deprive it of this, and all without, that would have buoyed it aloft even to the seat of the gods, becomes a burthen and crushes it into flatness. 12

2

The finer the sense for the beautiful and the lovely, and the fairer and lovelier the object presented to the sense ; the more exquisite the individual’s capacity of joy, and the more ample his means and opportunities of enjoyment, the

more heavily will he feel the ache of solitariness,
 the more unsubstantial becomes the feast spread
 around him. What matters it, whether in fact
 the viands and the ministering graces are shadowy
 or real, to him who has not hand to grasp nor
 arms to embrace them?

23

3

Imagination ; honourable aims ;
 Free commune with the choir that cannot
 die ;

25

Science and song ; delight in little things,
 The buoyant child surviving in the man ;
 Fields, forests, ancient mountains, ocean, sky,
 With all their voices — O dare I accuse
 My earthly lot as guilty of my spleen,
 Or call my destiny niggard ! O no ! no !
 It is her largeness, and her overflow,
 Which being incomplete, disquieteth me so !

30

4

For never touch of gladness stirs my heart,
 But tim'rously beginning to rejoice
 Like a blind Arab, that from sleep doth start
 In lonesome tent, I listen for *thy* voice.
 Beloved ! 'tis not thine ; thou art not there !
 Then melts the bubble into idle air,
 And wishing without hope I restlessly despair.

35

40

5

The mother with anticipated glee
 Smiles o'er the child, that, standing by her chair
 And flatt'ning its round cheek upon her knee,
 Looks up, and doth its rosy lips prepare
 To mock the coming sounds. At that sweet
 sight 45
 She hears her own voice with a new delight ;
 And if the babe perchance should lisp the notes
 aright,

6

Then is she tenfold gladder than before !
 But should disease or chance the darling take,
 What then avail those songs, which sweet of yore 50
 Were only sweet for their sweet echo's sake ?
 Dear maid ! no prattler at a mother's knee
 Was e'er so dearly prized as I prize *thee* :
 Why was I made for Love and Love denied to
 me ?

A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY A VIEW

OF SADDLEBACK IN CUMBERLAND

1806-1833

ON stern Blencartha's perilous height
 The winds are tyrannous and strong ;

And flashing forth unsteady light
 From stern Blencartha's skiey height,
 As loud the torrents throng !
 Beneath the moon, in gentle weather,
 They bind the earth and sky together.
 But oh ! the sky and all its forms, how
 quiet !
 The things that seek the earth, how full of
 noise and riot !

5

AD VILMUM AXIOLOGUM

1806-1893 ?

THIS be the meed, that thy song creates a
 thousand-fold echo !
 Sweet as the warble of woods, that awakes at
 the gale of the morning !
 List ! the Hearts of the Pure, like caves in the
 ancient mountains
 Deep, deep *in* the Bosom, and *from* the Bosom
 resound it,
 Each with a different tone, complete or in
 musical fragments —
 All have welcomed thy Voice, and receive and
 retain and prolong it !

5

This is the word of the Lord ! it is spoken and
 Beings Eternal



William Wordsworth

AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY HANCOCK
PAINTED IN WORDSWORTH'S TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR.

Live and are borne as an Infant, the Eternal
 begets the Immortal,
 Love is the Spirit of Life, and Music the Life
 of the Spirit !

MS.

TO A GENTLEMAN

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RE-
 CITATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF
 AN INDIVIDUAL MIND

1807-1815

FRIEND of the wise ! and Teacher of the
 Good !

Into my heart have I received that Lay
 More than historic, that prophetic Lay
 Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
 Of the foundations and the building up 5
 Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to tell
 What may be told, to the understanding mind
 Revealable ; and what within the mind
 By vital breathings secret as the soul
 Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart 10
 Thoughts all too deep for words ! —

Theme hard as high !
 Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears
 (The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth),

Of tides obedient to external force,
And currents self-determined, as might seem, 15
Or by some inner Power ; of moments awful,
Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
When power streamed from thee, and thy soul
received

The light reflected, as a light bestowed —
Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth, 20
Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
Native or outland, lakes and famous hills !
Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
Were rising ; or by secret mountain-streams, 25
The guides and the companions of thy way !

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst 30
Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when no
cloud

Is visible, or shadow on the main.
For thou wert there, thine own brows gar-
landed,

Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
Amid a mighty nation jubilant, 35
When from the general heart of human kind
Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity !

— Of that dear Hope afflicted and struck
down,
So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and
sure
From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute
self, 40
With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
Far on — herself a glory to behold,
The Angel of the vision ! Then (last strain)
Of Duty, chosen Laws controlling choice,
Action and joy ! — An orphic song indeed, 45
A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
To their own music chaunted !

O great Bard !
Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
With stedfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
Of ever-enduring men. The truly great 50
Have all one age, and from one visible space
Shed influence ! They, both in power and act,
Are permanent, and Time is not with *them*,
Save as it worketh *for* them, they *in* it.
Nor less a sacred Roll, than those of old, 55
And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
Among the archives of mankind, thy work
Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes ! 60

Ah ! as I listen'd with a heart forlorn,
The pulses of my being beat anew :
And even as life returns upon the drowned,
Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains —
Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe 65
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart ;
And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of
hope ;
And hope that scarce would know itself from
fear ;
Sense of past youth, and manhood come in
vain,
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain ; 70
And all which I had culled in wood-walks
wild,
And all which patient toil had reared, and all,
Commune with *thee* had opened out — but
flowers
Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
In the same coffin, for the self-same grave ! 75

That way no more ! and ill beseems it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
Singing of glory, and futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm ! And ill 80
Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
Strew'd before *thy* advancing !

Nor do thou,

Sage Bard ! impair the memory of that hour
Of thy communion with my nobler mind
By pity or grief, already felt too long ! 85
Nor let my words import more blame than
needs.

The tumult rose and ceased : for Peace is nigh
Where wisdom's voice has found a listening
heart.

Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours 90
Already on the wing.

Eve following eve,

Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of
Home

Is sweetest ! moments for their own sake hailed
And more desired, more precious, for thy song,
In silence listening, like a devout child, 95
My soul lay passive, by thy various strain
Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,
With momentary stars of my own birth,
Fair constellated foam, still darting off
Into the darkness ; now a tranquil sea, 100
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when — O Friend ! my comforter and
guide !

256 *Select Poems of Coleridge*

Strong in thyself, and powerful to give
strength! —

Thy long sustained Song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased — yet thou
thyself 105

Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
That happy vision of beloved faces —
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought
(Thought was it? or aspiration? or resolve?) 110
Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound —
And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

A DAY-DREAM

1807?–1828

My eyes make pictures, when they are shut :
I see a fountain, large and fair,
A willow and a ruined hut,
And thee, and me and Mary there.
O Mary ! make thy gentle lap our pillow ! 5
Bend o'er us, like a bower, my beautiful green
willow !

A wild-rose roofs the ruined shed,
And that and summer well agree :
And lo ! where Mary leans her head,
Two dear names carved upon the tree ! 10

And Mary's tears, they are not tears of sorrow:
Our sister and our friend will both be here to-
morrow.

'Twas day! but now few, large, and bright,
The stars are round the crescent moon!
And now it is a dark warm night, 15
The balmiest of the month of June!
A glow-worm fall'n, and on the marge re-
mounting
Shines, and its shadow shines, fit stars for our
sweet fountain.

O ever — ever be thou blest!
For dearly, Asra! love I thee! 20
This brooding warmth across my breast,
This depth of tranquil bliss — ah, me!
Fount, tree and shed are gone, I know not
whither,
But in one quiet room we three are still together.

The shadows dance upon the wall, 25
By the still dancing fire-flames made;
And now they slumber moveless all!
And now they melt to one deep shade!
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal
thee:
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I
feel thee! 30

Thine eyelash on my cheek doth play —
 'Tis Mary's hand upon my brow !
 But let me check this tender lay
 Which none may hear but she and
 thou !
 Like the still hive at quiet midnight hum-
 ming, 35
 Murmur it to yourselves, ye two beloved wo-
 men !

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE

1807 ?—1817

I

How warm this woodland wild recess !
 Love surely hath been breathing here :
 And this sweet bed of heath, my dear !
 Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
 As if to have you yet more near. 5

II

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
 On sea-ward Quantock's heathy hills,
 Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
 Float here and there, like things astray,
 And high o'er head the sky-lark shrills. 10

III

No voice as yet had made the air
 Be music with your name ; yet why
 That asking look ? that yearning sigh ?
 That sense of promise every where ?
 Beloved ! flew your spirit by ? 15

IV

As when a mother doth explore
 The rose-mark on her long-lost child,
 I met, I loved you, maiden mild !
 As whom I long had loved before —
 So deeply had I been beguiled. 20

V

You stood before me like a thought,
 A dream remembered in a dream.
 But when those meek eyes first did seem
 To tell me, Love within you wrought —
 O Greta, dear domestic stream ! 25

VI

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
 Has not Love's whisper evermore
 Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar ?
 Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
 Dear under-song in Clamour's hour. 30

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH

1809 ?-1809

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane !
(So call him, for so mingling blame with praise
And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest
friends,
Masking his birth-name, wont to character
His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal) 5
'Tis true that, passionate for ancient truths,
And honouring with religious love the Great
Of elder times, he hated to excess,
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
The hollow puppets of an hollow age, 10
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
Its worthless idols ! Learning, power, and time,
(Too much of all) thus wasting in vain war
Of fervid colloquy. Sickness, 'tis true,
Whole years of weary days, besieged him close, 15
Even to the gates and inlets of his life !
But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm,
And with a natural gladness, he maintained
The citadel unconquered, and in joy
Was strong to follow the delightful Muse. 20
For not a hidden path, that to the shades
Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads,
Lurked undiscovered by him ; not a rill
There issues from the fount of Hippocrene,

But he had traced it upward to its source, 25
 Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell,
 Knew the gay wild flowers on its banks, and
 culled
 Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone,
 Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,
 The haunt obscure of old Philosophy, 30
 He bade with lifted torch its starry walls
 Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame
 Of odorous lamps tended by Saint and Sage.
 O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts !
 O studious Poet, eloquent for truth ! 35
 Philosopher ! contending wealth and death,
 Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love !
 Here, rather than on monumental stone,
 This record of thy worth thy Friend inscribes,
 Thoughtful, with quiet tears upon his cheek. 40

PORTRAIT OF SIR GEORGE BEAU- MONT

1814-1817

Zulimez (speaking of Alvar in the third person).

Such was the noble Spaniard's own relation.

He told me, too, how in his early youth,
 And his first travels, 'twas his choice or chance
 To make long sojourn in sea-wedded Venice;

There won the love of that divine old man, 5
Courtied by mightiest kings, the famous Titian !
Who, like a second and more lovely Nature,
By the sweet mystery of lines and colours
Changed the blank canvas to a magic mirror,
That made the Absent present ; and to Shadows 10
Gave light, depth, substance, bloom, yea,
thought and motion.

He loved the old man, and revered his art :
And though of noblest birth and ample fortune,

The young enthusiast thought it no scorn
But this inalienable ornament, 15
To be his pupil, and with filial zeal
By practice to appropriate the sage lessons,
Which the gay, smiling old man gladly gave.
The Art, he honoured thus, requited him :
And in the following and calamitous years 20
Beguiled the hours of his captivity.

Alhadra. And then he framed this picture ?
and unaided

- By arts unlawful, spell, or talisman !

Alvar. A potent spell, a mighty talisman !
The imperishable memory of the deed, 25
Sustained by love, and grief, and indignation !
So vivid were the forms within his brain,
His very eyes, when shut, made pictures of
them !

GLYCINE'S SONG

1815-1817

A SUNNY shaft did I behold,
 From sky to earth it slanted :
 And poised therein a bird so bold —
 Sweet bird, thou wert enchanted !

He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled 5
 Within that shaft of sunny mist ;
 His eyes of fire, his beak of gold,
 All else of amethyst !

And thus he sang : ‘ Adieu ! adieu !
 Love’s dreams prove seldom true. 10
 The blossoms they make no delay :
 The sparkling dew-drops will not stay.
 Sweet month of May,
 We must away ;
 Far, far away ! 15
 To-day ! to-day !

HUNTING SONG

1815-1817

UP, up ! ye dames, and lasses gay !
 To the meadows trip away.
 ’Tis you must tend the flocks this morn,
 And scare the small birds from the corn.
 Not a soul at home may stay : 5

For the shepherds must go
 With lance and bow
 To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

Leave the hearth and leave the house
 To the cricket and the mouse:
 Find grannam out a sunny seat,
 With babe and lambkin at her feet.

10

Not a soul at home may stay:

For the shepherds must go
 With lance and bow
 To hunt the wolf in the woods to-day.

15

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY

AN ALLEGORY

1815-1817

ON the wide level of a mountain's head,
 (I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
 Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails out-spread,
 Two lovely children run an endless race,
 A sister and a brother!

5

This far outstript the other;
 Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
 And looks and listens for the boy behind:
 For he, alas! is blind!

O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed, 10
 And knows not whether he be first or last.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB

1817?-1834

WHERE is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
 Where may the grave of that good man be? —
 By the side of a spring, on the breast of Hel-
 velyn,
 Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
 The oak that in summer was sweet to hear, 5
 And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
 And whistled and roar'd in the winter alone,
 Is gone, — and the birch in its stead is grown. —
 The Knight's bones are dust,
 And his good sword rust; — 10
 His soul is with the saints, I trust.

FANCY IN NUBIBUS

OR THE POET IN THE CLOUDS

1819-1819

O! IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
 Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
 To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
 Or let the easily persuaded eyes
 Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould 5
 Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
 And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
 'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller,
 go

From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land !

Or list'ning to the tide, with closed sight, 10
 Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
 By those deep sounds possessed with inward
 light,
 Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
 Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

TO NATURE

1820 ?-1836

It may indeed be phantasy when I
 Essay to draw from all created things
 Deep, heartfelt, inward joy that closely clings ;
 And trace in leaves and flowers that round me
 lie

Lessons of love and earnest piety. 5
 So let it be ; and if the wide world rings
 In mock of this belief, it brings
 Nor fear, nor grief, nor vain perplexity.
 So will I build my altar in the fields,
 And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be, 10
 And the sweet fragrance that the wild flower
 yields

Shall be the incense I will yield to Thee,
 Thee only God ! and thou shalt not despise
 Even me, the priest of this poor sacrifice.

YOUTH AND AGE

1823-1828

VERSE, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee —
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young! 5

When I was young? — Ah, woful *When*!
Ah! for the change 'twixt *Now* and *Then*!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands, 10
How lightly *then* it flashed along: —
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide! 15
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.
Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like, 20
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!

Ere I was old? Ah woful *Ere*,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!

O Youth ! for years so many and sweet, 25
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit —
It cannot be that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd : —
And thou wert aye a masker bold ! 30
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To *make believe*, that thou art gone ?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size :
But Spring-tide blossoms on thy lips, 35
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
Life is but thought : so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve ! 40
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old :

That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave, 45
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismiss ;
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

LOVE'S FIRST HOPE

1824-1834

O FAIR is Love's first hope to gentle mind !
 As Eve's first star thro' fleecy cloudlet peeping ;
 And sweeter than the gentle south-west wind,
 O'er willowy meads, and shadow'd waters
 creeping,
 And Ceres' golden fields ; — the sultry hind 5
 Meets it with brow uplift, and stays his reaping.

ALICE DU CLOS

OR THE FORKED TONGUE

A BALLAD

1825?-1834

' One word with two meanings is the traitor's shield and shaft :
 and a slit tongue be his blazon ! '

Caucasian Proverb.

' THE Sun is not yet risen,
 But the dawn lies red on the dew :
 Lord Julian has stolen from the hunters away,
 Is seeking, Lady, for you.
 Put on your dress of green, 5
 Your buskins and your quiver ;
 Lord Julian is a hasty man,
 Long waiting brook'd he never.
 I dare not doubt him, that he means

To wed you on a day, 10
Your lord and master for to be,
And you his lady gay.
O Lady ! throw your book aside !
I would not that my Lord should chide.'

Thus spake Sir Hugh the vassal knight 15
To Alice, child of old Du Clos,
As spotless fair, as airy light
As that moon-shiny doe,
The gold star on its brow, her sire's ancestral
crest !

For ere the lark had left his nest, 20
She in the garden bower below
Sate loosely wrapt in maiden white,
Her face half drooping from the sight,
A snow-drop on a tuft of snow !

O close your eyes, and strive to see 25
The studious maid, with book on knee, —
Ah ! earliest-open'd flower ;
While yet with keen unblunted light
The morning star shone opposite
The lattice of her bower — 30
Alone of all the starry host,
As if in prideful scorn
Of flight and fear he stay'd behind,
To brave th' advancing morn.

O ! Alice could read passing well, 35
 And she was conning then
 Dan Ovid's mazy tale of loves,
 And gods, and beasts, and men.

The vassal's speech, his taunting vein,
 It thrill'd like venom thro' her brain ; 40
 Yet never from the book
 She rais'd her head, nor did she deign
 The knight a single look.

' Off, traitor friend ! how dar'st thou fix
 Thy wanton gaze on me ? 45
 And why, against my earnest suit,
 Does Julian send by thee ?

' Go, tell thy Lord, that slow is sure :
 Fair speed his shafts to-day !
 I follow here a stronger lure, 50
 And chase a gentler prey.'

She said : and with a baleful smile
 The vassal knight reel'd off —
 Like a huge billow from a bark
 Toil'd in the deep sea-trough, 55
 That shouldering sideways in mid plunge,
 Is travers'd by a flash.
 And staggering onward, leaves the ear
 With dull and distant crash.

And Alice sate with troubled mien 60
A moment ; for the scoff was keen,
And thro' her veins did shiver !
Then rose and donn'd her dress of green,
Her buskins and her quiver.

There stands the flow'ring may-thorn tree ! 65
From thro' the veiling mist you see
The black and shadowy stem ; —
Smit by the sun the mist in glee
Dissolves to lightsome jewelry —
Each blossom hath its gem ! 70

With tear-drop glittering to a smile,
The gay maid on the garden-stile
Mimics the hunter's shout.
' Hip ! Florian, hip ! To horse, to horse !
Go, bring the palfrey out. 75

' My Julian's out with all his clan,
And, bonny boy, you wis,
Lord Julian is a hasty man,
Who comes late, comes amiss.'

Now Florian was a stripling squire, 80
A gallant boy of Spain,
That toss'd his head in joy and pride,
Behind his Lady fair to ride,
But blush'd to hold her train.

The huntress is in her dress of green, — 85
 And forth they go ; she with her bow,
 Her buskins and her quiver ! —
 The squire — no younger e'er was seen —
 With restless arm and laughing een,
 He makes his javelin quiver. 90

And had' not Ellen stay'd the race,
 And stopp'd to see, a moment's space,
 The whole great globe of light
 Give the last parting kiss-like touch
 To the eastern ridge, it lack'd not much, 95
 They had o'erta'en the knight.

It chanced that up the covert lane,
 Where Julian waiting stood,
 A neighbour knight prick'd on to join
 The huntsmen in the wood. 100

And with him must Lord Julian go,
 Tho' with an anger'd mind :
 Betroth'd not wedded to his bride,
 In vain he sought, 'twixt shame and pride,
 Excuse to stay behind. 105

He bit his lip, he wrung his glove,
 He look'd around, he look'd above,
 But pretext none could find or frame.

Alas ! alas ! and well-a-day !

It grieves me sore to think, to say,

That names so seldom meet with Love,

Yet Love wants courage without a name !

110

Straight from the forest's skirt the trees

O'er-branching, made an aisle,

Where hermit old might pace and chaunt

As in a minster's pile.

115

From underneath its leafy screen,

And from the twilight shade,

You pass at once into a green,

A green and lightsome glade.

120

And there Lord Julian sate on steed ;

Behind him, in a round,

Stood knight and squire, and menial train ;

Against the leash the greyhounds strain ;

The horses paw'd the ground.

125

When up the alley green, Sir Hugh

Spurr'd in upon the sward,

And mute, without a word, did he

Fall in behind his lord.

Lord Julian turn'd his steed half round, —

‘ What ! doth not Alice deign

130

To accept your loving convoy, knight ?
Or doth she fear our woodland sleight,
And joins us on the plain ?'

With stifled tones the knight replied, 135
And look'd askance on either side, —

‘ Nay, let the hunt proceed ! —
The Lady's message that I bear,
I guess would scanty please your ear,
And less deserves your heed. 140

‘ You sent betimes. Not yet unbarr'd
I found the middle door ; —
Two stirrers only met my eyes,
Fair Alice, and one more.

‘ I came unlook'd for : and, it seem'd, 145
In an unwelcome hour ;
And found the daughter of Du Clos
Within the lattic'd bower.

‘ But hush ! the rest may wait. If lost, 150
No great loss, I divine ;
And idle words will better suit
A fair maid's lips than mine.'

‘ God's wrath ! speak out, man,' Julian cried,
O'ermaster'd by the sudden smart ; —

And feigning wrath, sharp, blunt, and rude, 155
The knight his subtle shift pursued. —
‘Scowl not at me ; command my skill,
To lure your hawk back, if you will,
But not a woman’s heart.

“ Go ! (said she) tell him, — slow is sure ; 160
Fair speed his shafts to-day !
I follow here a stronger lure,
And chase a gentler prey.”

‘ The game, pardie, was full in sight,
That then did, if I saw aright, 165
The fair dame’s eyes engage ;
For turning, as I took my ways,
I saw them fix’d with steadfast gaze
Full on her wanton page.’

The last word of the traitor knight 170
It had but entered Julian’s ear, —
From two o’erarching oaks between,
With glist’ning helm-like cap is seen,
Borne on in giddy cheer,

A youth, that ill his steed can guide ; 175
Yet with reverted face doth ride,
As answering to a voice,
That seems at once to laugh and chide —

‘Not mine, dear mistress,’ still he cried,
 ‘’Tis this mad filly’s choice.’ 180

With sudden bound, beyond the boy,
 See! see! that face of hope and joy,
 That regal front! those cheeks aglow!
 Thou needed’st but the crescent sheen,
 A quiver’d Dian to have been, 185
 Thou lovely child of old Du Clos!

Dark as a dream Lord Julian stood,
 Swift as a dream, from forth the wood,
 Sprang on the plighted Maid!
 With fatal aim, and frantic force, 190
 The shaft was hurl’d! — a lifeless corse,
 Fair Alice from her vaulting horse
 Lies bleeding on the glade.

DUTY SURVIVING SELF-LOVE

THE ONLY SURE FRIEND OF DECLINING LIFE

A SOLILOQUY

1826-1828

UNCHANGED within, to see all changed with-
 out,
 Is a blank lot and hard to bear, no doubt.
 Yet why at others’ wanings should’st thou fret?

Then only might'st thou feel a just regret,
 Hadst thou withheld thy love or hid thy light 5
 In selfish forethought of neglect and slight.
 O wiselier then, from feeble yearnings freed,
While, and on whom, thou may'st — shine on !
 nor heed
 Whether the object by reflected light
 Return thy radiance or absorb it quite : 10
 And though thou notest from thy safe recess
 Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome
 air,
 Love them for what they *are* ; nor love them
 less,
 Because to *thee* they are not what they *were*.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE

LINES COMPOSED 21ST FEBRUARY 1827

1827-1828

ALL Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
 lair —
 The bees are stirring — birds are on the
 wing —
 And Winter slumbering in the open air,
 Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring !
 And I the while, the sole unbusy thing, 5
 Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor
 sing.

‘And Oft I Saw Him Stray’ 279

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths
 blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar
 flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths ! bloom for whom ye
 may,
For me ye bloom not ! Glide, rich streams,
 away ! 10
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I
 stroll :
And would you learn the spells that drowse my
 soul ?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

‘AND OFT I SAW HIM STRAY’

1828-1835

‘And oft I saw him stray,
The bells of fox-glove in his hand — and ever
And anon he to his ear would hold a blade
Of that stiff grass that ’mong the heath-flower
 grows,
Which made a subtle kind of melody, 5
Most like the apparition of a breeze,
Singing with its thin voice in shadowy worlds.’

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO

1828-1829

OF late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone ;
And, from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the Past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain ! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cow'r'd o'er my own vacancy !
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumb'ring, seem'd alone to
wake ;
O Friend ! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design.
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry !
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
Framed in the silent poesy of form.
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
Emerging from a mist : or like a stream
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's
dream,
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might

The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my
 chest, 25
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.
And one by one (I know not whence) were
 brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my
 thought
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost ; 30
Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from
 above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love ;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man !
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn caves 35
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and
 waves ;
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades ;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast ;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest, 40
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang,
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd. 45
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,

Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd
Even in my dawn of thought — Philosophy ;
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie, 50
She bore no other name than Poesy ;
And, like a gift from heaven, in life's glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and
stone,
As if with elfin playfellows well known, 55
And life reveal'd to innocence alone.

Thanks, gentle artist ! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And *all* awake ! And now in fix'd gaze stand,
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand ; 60
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer ;
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop
The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer ! I myself am there, 65
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,
And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings ;
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she
dwells. 70
With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possesst,

And breathe an air like life, that swells my
chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy !
O Florence ! with the Tuscan fields and hills 75

And famous Arno, fed with all their rills ;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy !
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.

Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old, 80
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn ;
Palladian palace with its storied halls ;
Fountains, where Love lies listening to their
falls ; 85

Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And Nature makes her happy home with man ;
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head, 90
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn ; —
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine ;
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance ! 95
Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
See ! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees

The new-found roll of old Mæonides ;
 But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
 Peers Ovid's Holy Book of Love's sweet smart !

O all-enjoying and all-blending sage, 101
 Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
 Where, half conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
 Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious
 to thy muse !

Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks, 105
 And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
 Of the trim vines, some maid that half be-
 lieves
 The *vestal* fires, of which her lover grieves,
 With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves !

LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION

1829-1830

O'ER wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm
 rule,
 And sun thee in the light of happy faces ;
 Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy
 graces,
 And in thine own heart let them first keep
 school.

For as old Atlas on his broad neck places 5
Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it ; —

so

Do these upbear the little world below
Of Education, — Patience, Love, and Hope.
Methinks, I see them group'd in seemly show,
The straiten'd arms upraised, the palms aslope, 10
And robes that touching as adown they flow,
Distinctly blend, like snow emboss'd in snow.

O part them never ! If Hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.

But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive 15
From her own life that Hope is yet alive ;
And bending o'er, with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half sup-
plies ; —

Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave
to Love. 20

Yet haply there will come a weary day,
When overtask'd at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give
way.

Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth, 25
And both supporting does the work of both.

LINES

WRITTEN IN COMMONPLACE BOOK OF MISS BAR-
BOUR, DAUGHTER OF THE MINISTER OF THE
U. S. A. TO ENGLAND

1829-1829

CHILD of my muse ! in Barbour's gentle hand
Go cross the main : thou seek'st no foreign land :
'Tis not the clod beneath our feet we name
Our country. Each heaven-sanctioned tie the
same,

Laws, manners, language, faith, ancestral blood, 5
Domestic honour, awe of womanhood : —
With kindling pride thou wilt rejoice to see
Britain with elbow-room and doubly free !
Go seek thy countrymen ! and if one scar
Still linger of that fratricidal war, 10
Look to the maid who brings thee from afar ;
Be thou the olive-leaf and she the dove,
And say I greet thee with a brother's love !

PHANTOM OR FACT

A DIALOGUE IN VERSE

1830 ?-1834 ?

AUTHOR

A LOVELY form there sate beside my bed,
And such a feeding calm its presence shed,

A tender love so pure from earthly leaven,
That I unnethe the fancy might control,
'Twas my own spirit newly come from heaven, 5
Wooing its gentle way into my soul !
But ah ! the change — It had not stirr'd, and
yet —
Alas ! that change how fain would I forget !
That shrinking back, like one that had mis-
took !
That weary, wandering, disavowing look ! 10
'Twas all another, feature, look, and frame,
And still, methought, I knew, it was the same !

FRIEND

This riddling tale, to what does it belong ?
Is't history ? vision ? or an idle song ?
Or rather say at once, within what space 15
Of time this wild disastrous change took place ?

AUTHOR

Call it a *moment's* work (and such it seems)
This tale's a fragment from the life of dreams ;
But say, that years matur'd the silent strife,
And 'tis a record from the dream of life. 20

LOVE'S APPARITION AND EVANISH-
MENT

AN ALLEGORIC ROMANCE

1833-1834

LIKE a lone Arab, old and blind,
Some caravan had left behind,
Who sits beside a ruin'd well,
Where the shy sand-asps bask and swell ;
And now he hangs his aged head aslant, 5
And listens for a human sound — in vain !
And now the aid, which Heaven alone can
grant,
Upturns his eyeless face from Heaven to
gain ; —
Even thus, in vacant mood, one sultry hour,
Resting my eye upon a drooping plant, 10
With brow low-bent, within my garden-bower,
I sate upon the couch of camomile ;
And — whether 'twas a transient sleep, per-
chance,
Flitted across the idle brain, the while
I watch'd the sickly calm with aimless scope, 15
In my own heart ; or that, indeed a trance,
Turn'd my eye inward — thee, O genial Hope,
Love's elder sister ! thee did I behold,
Drest as a bridesmaid, but all pale and cold,
With roseless cheek, all pale and cold and dim, 20

Lie lifeless at my feet !
 And then came Love, a sylph in bridal trim,
 And stood beside my seat ;
 She bent, and kiss'd her sister's lips,
 As she was wont to do ; — 25
 Alas ! 'twas but a chilling breath
 Woke just enough of life in death
 To make Hope die anew.

L'ENVOY

In vain we supplicate the Powers above ;
 There is no resurrection for the Love 30
 That, nursed in tenderest care, yet fades away
 In the chill'd heart by gradual self-decay.

EPITAPH

1833-1834

STOP, Christian passer-by ! — Stop, child of
 God,
 And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
 A poet lies, or that which once seem'd he. —
 O, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C. ;
 That he who many a year with toil of breath 5
 Found death in life, may here find life in death !
 Mercy for praise — to be forgiven for fame
 He ask'd, and hoped, through Christ
 Do thou the same !

9th November 1833.

CHRONOLOGICAL

- 1772. Born at Ottery St. Mary, Oct. 21.
- 1782. Admitted to Christ's Hospital.
- 1791. Enters Cambridge University.
- 1793. Enlists in the Light Dragoons.
- 1794. Returns to Cambridge; meets Southey at Oxford; Pantisocracy hatched; leaves Cambridge and goes to London.
- 1795. Goes to Bristol; marries Miss Fricker, and settles at Clevedon.
- 1796. First volume of poems; *The Watchman*.
- 1797. Removes to Nether Stowey; first meeting with Wordsworth; the *Lyrical Ballads* begun.
- 1798. *Lyrical Ballads* published; visits Germany with the Wordsworths.
- 1799. Returns to England; *Morning Post* and *Wallenstein*.
- 1800. Removes to Greta Hall, Keswick.
- 1801. Broken health; the "Kendal Black Drop."
- 1802. Dejection and family discord.
- 1803. Visits Scotland with the Wordsworths.
- 1804. Sails for Malta; made secretary to Sir Alexander Ball.
- 1805. Visits Sicily and Rome.
- 1806-10. At Coleorton with Wordsworth; lectures on the poets at the Royal Institution, London; at Grasmere; projects *The Friend*.
- 1811-12. In London; lectures on Shakespeare and Milton.
- 1813-16. *Remorse* at Drury Lane; lectures at Bristol; goes to Calne; settles at Highgate with the Gillmans; publishes *Christabel*.
- 1817. *Biographia Literaria* and *Sibylline Leaves*.
- 1818-19. Lectures in London.
- 1820-24. Hackwork.
- 1825. *Aids to Reflection*; Pension.
- 1826-34. Last years at Highgate: Visits the Rhine with Wordsworth; John Sterling his pupil; Emerson visits him; Died July 25.

NOTES

1772-1786

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was born at the Vicarage of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, October 21, 1772. His father, Rev. John Coleridge, was vicar of the parish, Chaplain and Master of the Free Grammar School founded by Henry VIII and known as King's School. John Coleridge was twice married, having three daughters by the first marriage, nine sons, of whom Samuel was the youngest, and one daughter by the second. His second wife was a practical, thrifty, home-loving woman, with ambitions for her many sons; these qualities were in striking contrast to those of the Vicar who as the poet said: "In learning, good-heartedness, absentness of mind, and excessive ignorance of the world, was a perfect Parson Adams." He is still remembered at the old school as one of its most distinguished teachers.

A glimpse into the heart of this remarkable family is given by the poet in his letters to Thomas Poole and his poems. He tells us that being the baby in the group he was petted by his father and brother George, and worshipped by his mother; and because of his precocity he was the admiration of the old women; as a result he was disliked by the other children and became petulant, vain and moody. He lived quite apart from his mates, in a world of his own creation, for he was a prodigy from his earliest days, and illustrated his father's teaching, — that "the sublime is born with man and cannot be taught; a soaring mind will wear no shackles." He fed upon romance in story and song, reading from the age of three — when he entered school — everything which ministered to his sense of the marvellous. His only play was in acting such scenes as he had found in legends and myths. He says, "I had none of a child's habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child." Thus early he became a "footless bird of Paradise." Prof. Shairp asks, "Is it fanciful to imagine that

there was something in that character which accords well with the soft, mild and the dreamy loveliness that rests on the blue coombes and sea-coves of South Devon ?''

How the quiet old town of Ottery with its wealth of historic associations Roman, British and Norman, its noble church, its natural beauty — rivers, woods and hills — impressed him at this early age will be seen in his first poetical work.

The first great experience of Coleridge's life was that by which he became a liveried school boy mid cloisters dim, in the heart of a great city. He had not reached his tenth birthday when his father died. The family was obliged to leave the vicarage ; as the elder brother George was about to enter Oxford an old pupil of the Vicar's obtained a presentation for Samuel at the Charity School, Christ's Hospital, London. Thus rudely awakened from his idyllic dream-world he entered the great school in July 1782, 'too soon transplanted ere his soul had fixed its first domestic loves.' The school there contained about seven hundred boys, nearly one-third being sons of clergymen. Like so many of England's educational institutions this school was once a Franciscan monastery. It was converted into a charity by the orphan King Edward VI. Naturally enough many of the ascetic customs remained as part of the order of the school. The boys wore the monkish long coats buttoned to the throat and belted, yellow silk stockings, low shoes, white stock, and the head bare. The diet was spare, and the discipline vigorous. The noble buildings, quaint customs, stately halls hung with historic portraits and armorial bearings, ample courts for play, gave the place an air of dignity and grandeur which must have impressed the shy Devonshire lad. That he was homesick is to be taken for granted, but that he soon adjusted himself to the new life is evident. As the boys were privileged to free entry to the Tower, the Abbey and St. Paul's, so they were the chief attendants upon the Lord Mayor in his civic procession at Easter when he entertained them at tea. The blue-coat boys were treated with special respect by the citizens who thronged the halls of the school on St. Matthew's Day when declamations were given in the classics and prizes distributed, and who attended the public supper at Lent to hear the boys sing the anthems. One of the most striking ceremonies of the school was that which occurred on the death of one of the boys. All gathered by night in the court of the hospital

quarter, bearing torches and singing psalms, and solemnly moved through the echoing cloisters behind the coffin.

The teaching was thorough even to severity, and woe to the lad who fell behind in any of his work. Boyer the master has received distinctive and enviable recognition at the hands of his most famous pupils Coleridge in *Biographia Literaria* and Lamb in his inimitable *Essays on Christ Hospital*. No shirking, no pretence, ever escaped his notice. He was a terrible realist and hated affectation and false-brilliancy. When Coleridge began his experiences of poetry and love at the school they naturally colored his language and conduct, and Boyer quickly detected the causes, and would exclaim, "Muse, boys! Muse! Your Nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian fountain! Yes—the pump in the courtyard!" Coleridge had no difficulty in maintaining himself with distinction and became one of the select few known as Grecians, who read the most difficult Latin, Greek and Hebrew classics, in training for University scholarships. Alluding to the marvellous power which Coleridge exercised at that early age, Lamb, a quarter of a century later, writes: "Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration, to hear thee in thy deep and sweet intonations recite Homer in his Greek, or Pindar, while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired Charity boy!*"

It is just three hundred and fifty years ago that the boy King Edward VI, having been moved by a sermon of Bishop Ridley's which exhorted the rich to be mindful of the poor, began the movement which resulted in the founding of Christ's Hospital, in the heart of London, and in this year, 1902, in the reign of Edward VIIth, the great city ceases to be the home of the old school. For a long time the Commissioners of Charity have been moving to take the school into the country, as by the sale of the valuable city property more healthful and spacious quarters could be provided there. The Governors, however, hesitated until at last they were forced to take the step, and in 1887 secured 1200 acres near Horsham Sussex. Here new buildings have been erected to accommodate one thousand pupils. On Sunday, March

16, a farewell service was held in the venerable Christ's Church adjoining the Hospital in Newgate Street at which the new Bishop of London preached the sermon. On Easter Tuesday, April 1, over five hundred blue coat boys trooped through Cheapside to pay their annual visit to the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House. After an address by the Lord Mayor, each Grecian (fourteen) was presented with a guinea, each deputy Grecian (ten) with a half guinea, each monitor (thirty-four) with a half crown, and every other boy with a shilling, the coins being fresh from the mint. Then after two buns and a glass of lemonade or claret had been given to each lad they marched to Christ's Church followed by the Lord Mayor and the city officials, where the Bishop of St. Albans preached the 'Spital sermon. On Wednesday, April 16, at eventide the boys assembled in St. Paul's Cathedral, where they were addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Choral service was sung by the Hospital Choir of sixty voices. After the Easter holidays, which began the 19th of April, the school assembled in its new house at Horsham, and one of London's historic and picturesque attractions became extinct. No more will the passer-by linger at the palings to watch the eager throng of blue coat boys as (with the tails of their coats tucked tightly into their belts) they pass to their daily practice of football; no more will their historic festivals at Guild Hall, Mansion House and Christ's Church attract the citizen or the chance visitor, for they are now a part of history or a treasure in the memories of those who have been fortunate enough to witness them.

1786-1794.

GENEVIEVE.

First printed in the *Cambridge Intelligence*, Nov. 1, 1794.

Aside from his studies Coleridge's life was not without variety of incident. He rapidly made friends with kindred spirits, like Thomas Middleton, the Le Grice brothers, and Charles Lamb. There is little evidence that he took any prominent part in the sports of the school, although on holidays he joined his mates in swimming parties. On one occasion he swam New River with his clothes on and dried them on his back, with the result that he was obliged to spend much of the next year in the sick ward on account of rheumatism. Tradition ascribes this poem to this particular year and

its subject the daughter of the nurse who attended him. While with Coleridge, as with Burns, poetry and love began early, poetry seems to have gained the start as Boyer, unlike most masters of the English schools of the time, made much of the English poets and taught that the simplicity of Shakespeare was far above the rhetoric of Virgil. An interesting copy book in which Coleridge wrote his school exercises in verse is still in the possession of Boyer's grandson. It is valuable as showing what obstacles he had to overcome before he revealed that he was a poet; he says of these attempts, "they are only such thoughts as any clever lad might put into verse."

This poem is the earliest composition of his which has been preserved. In the first edition of his poems is the following: "This little poem was written when the author was a boy, age fourteen." It is an interesting fact that Wordsworth's earliest poem was written at the same age when he was at the Hawkshead school.

Coleridge was living in an age of literary transition. Gray, Collins and Goldsmith had struck new notes and the world was wondering; Cowper and Burns were just publishing their first work which was to set the critics teeth on edge. The old was dead, the new being born, and the contrast between them is revealed in the work of Coleridge.

1788-1796.

SONNET — TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON.

First Printed in *Poems*, 1796.

That Coleridge had other interests besides those of poetry may be seen from the fact that at one time he seriously contemplated apprenticing himself to a London shoemaker, and was saved only by the vigorous action of Boyer who broke up the arrangement by driving the son of Crispin from the school premises. Again when his brother Luke came up to work in the London Hospital he began to read the works on surgery and medicine, accompanied his brother on his rounds, and was delighted to hold the plaster. He then read metaphysics and Voltaire and sported infidel, but Boyer was again equal to the emergency and flogged it out of him. Coleridge said this was the only just flogging he ever received at the school. At times too he became homesick and then he lost himself in the remembrance of his rural home in Devon. He

would climb to the leaden roof of Christ's Hospital and gaze upon the sky and stars. Wordsworth says of these experiences :

“ Of rivers, fields
And groves I speak to thee, my Friend ! to thee
Who yet a liveried school boy, in the depths
Of a huge city, on the leaded roof
Of that wide edifice, thy school and home,
Wert used to lie and gaze upon the clouds
Moving in heaven ; or, of that pleasure tired,
To shut thine eyes, and by internal light,
See trees, and meadows, and thy native stream,
Far distant.”

Prelude VI.

Out of some such experience as this we may be sure the poem was written. It is much after the manner of Milton's *Il Penseroso* in its pensive quality and landscape effects. The shaping spirit of imagination is distinctly felt ; in freshness and spontaneity it reveals the new life with nature.

1789-1834.

TO THE MUSE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

About this time important influences were coming into the life of Coleridge. The first was his friendship with the Evans family. A son of this family was in a lower form in the school and Coleridge had protected him. Coleridge says, “ Therefore he looked up to me and taught me what it was to have a mother. I loved her much. She had three daughters, and of course I fell in love with the eldest. And oh ! from sixteen to nineteen what hours of paradise had Allen and I in escorting the Evanses home on a Saturday who were then at a milliners . . . and we used to carry thither of a summer evening, the pillage of the flower gardens within six miles of town, with sonnets or love rhymes wrapped round the nose gay. To be feminine, kind, and genteelly (what I should now call neatly) dressed, these were the only things to which my head, heart, or imagination had any polarity.” He became a son and brother in the family, but for Mary there was more than family feeling. His brother George was now Master in

the school at Hackney and Coleridge wrote him as follows: "You will excuse me for reminding you that, as our holidays commence next week, and I shall go out a good deal, a good pair of breeches will be no inconsiderable accession to my appearance, as my present ones are not altogether well adapted for a female eye."

The second great influence was that of Bowles' sonnets which were sent to him by his friend Middleton who had entered Cambridge. In this slight volume of twenty sonnets, he met nature, as he had not before in poetry, and was captivated by their freshness, originality, and simplicity. He copied them again and again in order that his friends might enjoy them with him. In writing of these to one of his friends he says, "They have done my heart more good than all the other books I ever read excepting the Bible." It is difficult for us in these days to conceive of a time when such influences could be produced by a little quarto. But Coleridge was not the only one over whom it cast its spell, for Wordsworth was not long after captivated by it. He first met the volume as he was starting for a walk, and kept his brother waiting on Westminster Bridge until he read the twenty sonnets.

"As the English romantic poets went forth to combat the classic school with its super-sense and pride of strict rules, and to endow the poetry of the fairy tale with new life, their first halt was under the shadow of Bowles." — Alois Brandl.

... "The first breath of Nature unsophisticated by classical tradition came to Coleridge from Bowles's sonnets; and he recognized it at once." — J. D. Campbell, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, p. 17.

The reflective morality is somewhat prominent in the concluding verses which remind one of the Gray's *Elegy*. In spite its eighteenth century elegance the poem is evidence that even now Coleridge was getting pleasure in his work. It is at least a "bud of hope and a promise of better works to come." Cf. *Biographia Literaria*, Chapter I.

There is a manuscript copy of this poem signed S. T. Coleridge.

1789?—1834.

DESTRUCTION OF THE BASTILE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

Two great influences in the life of Coleridge during these early days have been alluded to; the third and the greatest of all is

that which appears in this poem. How the early impulse of the French Revolution touched the younger minds in England should be read in Prof. Dowden's splendid work "The French Revolution and English Literature," which is an expansion of Chapter I in his earlier work "Studies in English Literature," Wordsworth's Prelude, and "The Youth of Wordsworth" by E. Legouis. What we are interested in here is that phase of it by which Coleridge was moved into that larger world of life and action in which he was destined by Providence to join forces with William Wordsworth, that other child of the Muses who was at this time at Cambridge and was being stirred by the same great awakening to the scenes of "Revolutionary power tossed like a ship at anchor, rocked by storms."

Wordsworth was born and educated in the north country of Cumberland and Westmoreland. Having been nourished by "Presences of Nature in the sky and in the earth," and having communed with those "Visions of the hills and souls of lonely places" until his mind became peopled with forms sublime and fair, he entered Granta's Cloisters, there to be an inmate of a world within a world. He roamed

" Delighted through the motley spectacle :
Gowns, grave or gaudy, doctors, students, streets,
Courts, cloisters, flocks of churches, gateways, towers ;
Migration strange for a stripling of the hills,
A northern villager."

From here his vacation visits to France brought him to feel something of the storm and stress, the tumult and passion of the Revolution.

His earliest poetry, which was being written the same year as this poem of Coleridge's, is an expression of his sympathy with the cause of humanity, and *Descriptive Sketches* (afterwards incorporated into the Prelude) reveal the first tidal impulse, moving him from the harbor life he had been living, out upon the turbulent sea of political and social controversy. How all this came about should be read in the Prelude.

The Revolution was not confined to the sphere of politics : that was only one feature of the great movement toward the goal of equal rights to which the nations were tending. It was a return to Nature in all the departments of life. This enthusiasm for Nature took form in France under Rousseau's extravagant and

diseased sensibility. In Germany the same feeling was manifested by Goethe, who combined the poetic with the scientific aspect of Nature, and swelled the great wave of feeling which was gathering force as it advanced. In England it had been growing into form for half a century. The heralds of the day arose from quarters and under circumstances quite unexpected, — from the sorrow and disappointment of Cowper and the untaught melodies of a plow-boy of Ayrshire, — the one in his invalid nightcap, the other in his blue bonnet and homespun. But the leaders in this ‘Liberation War of Humanity’ were to be Wordsworth and Coleridge.

What Prof. Dowden says of this early influence is evident in such a poem as this. “In this passion there was, no doubt, something immature, something hectic, something turbid, much unwise heat, not a little illusion. In its vivid and immediate influence the genius of the Revolution did an injury to art; it tended to convert the poet into a declaimer, a preacher, the missionary of an ill-considered evangel. In its remoter effects the gain was real and great.”

There is some doubt as to the exact date at which the poem was written, but Mr. J. Dykes Campbell gives it as possibly 1789. It could not have been earlier than this nor later than 1792, as will be seen from notes to *To a Young Lady*, p. 305. Mr. Campbell’s note is as follows: “First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834. The text differs slightly from an early MS. copy with the heading: — ‘An Ode to the Destruction of the Bastile,’ and signed S. T. C. In place of the asterisk is this note: (Stanza second and third are lost. We may gather from the context that they alluded to the Bastile and its inhabitants).” Mr. Alois Brandl suggests that this poem be compared with Gray’s *Progress of Poesy* for diction and verse. There is surely more agitation here than healthy animation. Here is the first effect of the Revolution, emotional; the second, intellectual, will be seen in the Ode to France. The first is seen in Wordsworth’s *Prelude*; the second in his political sonnets, where storm and stress pass into dignity, simplicity and repose of the highest art.

1789-1834.

LIFE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

This poem was written after a visit to his old home at Ottery where his sister Ann was in ill health. Mr. Campbell thinks

it was his first visit home since he went to Christ's Hospital. There are two early manuscripts copied of the poem and the text here differs slightly from each of these. The first two stanzas reveal how easily and naturally Coleridge could compose in verse descriptive, while the last two are weighted with his peculiarly mature thoughtfulness. There is little discipline yet in thinking and little restraint in expression, but the subtle souled psychologist is here.

1790-1794.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

(In Christ's Hospital Book.)

First printed in Launcelot Sharpe's edition of Chatterton's Poems, 1794.

When we consider the "marvellous boys" of our English literature, we have no hesitation in pronouncing Chatterton the most marvellous; even Burns and Blake, Coleridge and Keats, seem ordinary in comparison to him. Although not learning to read until he was six and dying before he was eighteen, he produced a body of poetry much of which, for romantic spirit, imaginative splendor, and captivating melody, still remains unsurpassed. The story of his life is the most pathetic in a literary history where pathos is by no means uncommon. In twelve years from 1767-1770 he did all his work, the larger part of which was a mass of pseudo-antique poetry, drama, lyrics and epic fragments which he attributed to an old monk Rowley of the fifteenth century. These, now known as the Rowley Poems, gave rise to as much heated controversy as the Ossianic poetry of McPherson. Because of this hoax he left Bristol, his native place, in 1770 and went up to London as a literary adventurer: there starvation brought on madness and he took his life in August of the same year, after writing poems, essays and stories for no less than six magazines.

Only three years before Coleridge wrote this poem Chatterton's works had been published and we may conjecture that they were among those read by Coleridge in that library, access to which tradition says was due to the fact that he was accosted in the street as a thief because while in imagination he was swimming the Hellespont with Leander his hand touched a gentleman's pocket, and on

hearing his defence the inquisitor subscribed for his admission to a circulating library. Others of the poetic Guild besides Coleridge have been glad to pay Chatterton honor.

“ The marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride.”
WORDSWORTH.

Keats dedicated *Endymion* to his memory, and writing to Mathew he asks him to help him to find a place

“ Where we may soft humanity put on,
And sit and rhyme, and think of Chatterton.”

Rossetti in writing sonnets on each of the “ Five English Poets,” gives the following —

“ Thy nested home-loves, noble Chatterton ;
The angel trodden stair thy soul could trace
Up Redcliffe’s spire ; and in the world’s armed space
Thy gallant sword play : these to many an one
Are sweet forever ; as thy grave unknown
And love dream of thine unrecorded face.”

Shelley’s tribute to him in *Adonais* where he presents him as welcoming Keats in the realms of death is one of the most beautiful of the tributes of his successes in the field of romance : —

“ The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the Unapparent, Chatterton
Rose pale, his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him.”

The Rowleian accent is to be found frequently in the poetry after Chatterton’s time.

In the *Biographia Literaria* Chapter I, Coleridge *risu honesto* exposes his early faults in three sonnets : “ The first had for its object to excite a good-natured laugh at the spirit of doleful egotism and the recurrence of favorite phrases. The second on low, creeping language and thoughts, under the pretence of simplicity. The

third on the indiscriminate use of elaborate and swelling language and imagery."

In its cumbrous splendor this poem reveals how completely Coleridge was in the literary atmosphere of the eighteenth century. Mr. Alois Brandl finds in it an evidence that Coleridge was breaking with traditional views of religion. He says "The moral of the Ode is Platonic rather than Christian." This poem has an interesting history of alterations and changes until 1794, and the student is referred to J. Dykes Campbell's edition 1893 for the facts. Cf. Lamb's Letters 1796-1797, edited by Canon Ainger for comments on the poem.

1790-1834.

ON RECEIVING AN ACCOUNT THAT HIS ONLY SISTER'S
DEATH WAS INEVITABLE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

The years 1790-1 were saddened by the loss of his brother Luke who had been so much to him while they were together in London, and his sister Ann. This poem was written in the interval between these bereavements. It is a sincere revelation of his love, but too full of the morbid emotion of Bowles.

1791?-1798.

THE RAVEN.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, March 10, 1798.

The greatest of the poems of his school life is *The Raven*. It contains clear prophecy of *The Ancient Mariner* in quality of imagination, exquisite music and central conception. It is one of the most fascinating child poems in the language, "The metrical movement," says Mr. Stopford Brooke, "is like a dance of the elemental beings of Nature, now as of Satyr's wild voiced Pan; now as of Nymphs, graceful, gay and light as summer leaves in wind; now as of embodied rivers and brooks in full and rushing joy; and now as of Ariel and his spirits footing it featly to and fro on the primitive sands."

The original title was *Dream*. The two closing lines were added for copy of 1817 *Sibylline Leaves*. Mr. Campbell says that

in the margin of a copy of this edition now in possession of Mr. Stewart M. Samuel there is the following note in Coleridge's handwriting :

“ Added through cowardly fear of the Goody ! What a Hollow, where the Heart of Faith ought to be, does it not betray — this alarm concerning Christian morality, — that it will not permit even a Raven to be a Raven, nor a Fox to be a Fox, but demands conventicular justice to be inflicted on their unchristian conduct, or at least an antidote to be annexed.”

Mr. Alois Brandl says : “ This first poetic work by Coleridge has already a republican aim and a popular tone.”

1791-1834.

SONNET — ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR COLLEGE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

Notwithstanding his bereavements Coleridge must have looked forward to his early entrance into other scenes of more freedom and responsibility ; and yet when the time arrived he naturally felt sad at leaving associations which had been so much to him, especially his friends Lamb, Robert Allen, and others. And he voices these feelings in this and the two following poems.

1791-1794.

ABSENCE.

First printed in *Cambridge Intelligencer*, Oct. 11, 1794.

Cf. Wordsworth's poem on *Anticipation of Leaving School*, written at the same age.

1791-1834.

HAPPINESS.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

Probably written at Ottery during the interim between leaving Christ's Hospital and entering Cambridge.

Mr. Campbell tells us that he has seen an early, perhaps an earlier, manuscript copy of this poem and that although the text

differs but little there is one interesting variant. The printed lines 91 and 92 are not in the manuscript where instead the passage gives : —

“ Ah ! doubly blest, if love supply
Lustre to this now heavy eye,
And with unwonted spirit grace
That fat vacuity of face,
Or if e'en Love, the mighty Love
Shall find this change his powers above ;
Some lovely maid perchance that'll find
To read thy visage in thy mind.”

‘ The author was at this time act. 17 (read 19, ed.) remarkable for a plump face.’ (Transcriber’s foot-note.)

1792-1893.

A WISH — WRITTEN IN JESUS WOOD FEB. 10, 1792.

First printed in J. Dykes Campbell’s edition, 1893.

Coleridge left school in September, 1791, and after a visit to his old home at Ottery he entered Jesus College, Cambridge in October of the same year. Life in the University at that time while, so different from that of the school, was not calculated to inspire such a youth as Coleridge. Wordsworth had just left Cambridge and was on his way to Paris, —

“ An idler, well content
To have a house (what matter for a home ?)
That owned him ; living cheerfully abroad,
With unchecked fancy ever on the stir,
And all my young affections out of doors.”

Landing at Paris on that great federal day he writes : —

“ Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive
But to be young was very heaven.”

Coleridge seems to have made friends rapidly, through the introductions by his schoolmates Middleton and the Le Grice brothers

his rooms became a centre of interest and influence. Here high discourse flourished and the young Freshman held his audience with the fascination and mystery of him who was "the first to burst into that silent sea" whence would come the story of the *Mariner*, *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel*. Tradition says that when he was soaring on the wings of dazzling rhetoric the impressionable youth listening would cut off bits of his gown as souvenirs; and that on one occasion he was reprimanded by Dr. Pierce for wearing so shameful a garb. "Mr. Coleridge! Mr. Coleridge! when will you get rid of that shameful gown?" He replied: "Why, Sir, I think I've got rid of the greater part of it already." He captured some prizes for poetry, read the philosophers, and brooded over the outburst of revolutionary spirit in France. He still kept up his friendship for the Evans family and continued in his devotion to Mary, — as is seen from the history of this poem given as follows by Mr. Campbell in his edition of Coleridge's poems 1893:—

"Here printed from a letter written by Coleridge from Cambridge to Mary Evans. This letter, with several others to Mrs. Evans, and to her daughters Mary and Anne are now in the great collection of Mr. Alfred Morrison of Fonthill." He here speaks as a landscape elegist, and the feeling "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

Gray in his Eton Ode has this overwrought pensiveness; when, seeing the boys at play he is somewhat sadly reminded:

"How all around them wait
The ministers of human fate
And black Misfortune's baleful train!"

1792-1796.

TO A YOUNG LADY WITH A POEM ON THE FRENCH
REVOLUTION.

First printed in the *Watchman*, 1796.

The date of this is given by Coleridge as 1792 and is addressed with others to Miss F. Nesbitt, at Plymouth, whither the author had repaired accompanied by his brother George to whom he was paying a visit. George was at this time Master of the Old School at Ottery.

I've not been able to find an allusion to this visit in any of the works of Coleridge, but as he was not very careful of his dates, and little is known of his Cambridge career, there may be an error here. At any rate we may feel sure that the poem on the French Revolution was that on the Destruction of the Bastile.

l. 9. Lee Boo, Prince of the Pelew Islands came to England where he died and was buried in Greenwich Churchyard.

l. 41 — Sara. This must have been added later as at the time of writing the poem he had not met Sara Fricker.

1793-1796.

SONGS OF THE PIXIES.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796.

In the long vacation of 1793 Coleridge visited his family at Ottery and during this visit he wrote this poem and the two which follow.

At the scene of this poem there is what is known as the Parlour of the Pixies and upon a rock in it the initials of Coleridge cut by his own hand are still legible.

In this graceful little poem Coleridge is on the firm ground of creative work and is simple, sensuous, impassioned. It strikes the lyrical note of Milton in *L'Allegro* and the songs of *Comus*, while the lines 92-100 distinctly reveal the lofty conception of virtue of the *Comus*. His ardour is not deep but his perception is fine, and his execution, though still imperfect, is wondrously beautiful in delicate fancy painting.

1793 ?-1797.

SONNET TO THE RIVER OTTER.

First Printed as a separate poem in *Poems*, 1797, parts having appeared with another poem in the *Watchman*, No. V, April 2, 1796.

This should be compared with Bowles's Sonnet To the River Itchin.

“ Itchin, when I behold thy banks again,
Thy crumbling margin, and thy silver breast,
On which the self-same tints still seem to rest,
Why feels my heart the shiv'ring sense of pain ?

Is it that many a summer's day is past
 Since, in life's morn, I carol'd on thy side ?
 Is it that oft, since then, my heart has sigh'd,
 As Youth and Hope's delusive gleams flew fast ?
 Is it that those who circled on thy shore,
 Companions of my youth, now meet no more ?
 Whate'er the cause, upon thy banks I bend,
 Sorrowing, yet feel such solace at my heart,
 As at the meeting of some long-lost friend,
 From whom, in happier hours, we wept to part."

1793-?

LINES TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

This evidently belongs to the same period as the preceding. It has an abundance of double epithets and turgid rhetoric, but only a little passion for nature.

Speaking of these early poems which so many critics condemn Mr. Richard Garnett says : " We see in them how men of true genius would have written if the great awakenings of the Romantic school and the French Revolution had never taken place, and are able to gauge in some degree an intellectual indebtedness to these mighty mutations. The contrast is the more instructive, as these early poems are by no means unpoetical. There is scarcely one which does not give evidence of having proceeded from a true poet."

1793 ?-1796.

LINES ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.

First printed in 1796. Title written in early youth ; the time an autumnal evening.

In October, 1793, Christopher Wordsworth entered Trinity College and at once became acquainted with Coleridge. They soon joined with others in forming a Literary Society. They discussed a review in the Current Monthly of the Descriptive Sketches, verse by Christopher's brother William. At one of the meetings Coleridge recited this poem, which was evidently written during his vacation at Ottery.

Here we have distinctive notes of the new feeling toward man and nature, which was awakened in the delightful scenery of his home. Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "This poem and *The Æolian Harp* are the first examples of the short meditative pieces in which Nature and the human affections are gently wrought together — a special kind of poetry Coleridge may be said to have invented and which no one has done so well."

ll. 17-20. Mr. Campbell says: "These lines may have been inspired by felicitations received from Mary Evans on the winning of the Browne gold medal in 1792."

1794-1798.

LEWTI, OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, April 13, 1798.

The years 1793-4 were eventful ones in the life of Coleridge. In December 1793 a crisis was reached — was it the failure of Mary Evans to respond to his love, or his inability to meet his college dues? At any rate he left the college without giving warning to any one and went to London. Having spent the first night in the street hungry and wretched he spied a government poster calling for volunteers for the light dragoons: he went to the recruiting office where after enlisting he got his breakfast and bounty money and was sent to the Government Mews at Reading. He enrolled under the name Silas Tomkyn Comberbach. He made a sorry picture when riding and grooming his horse, neither of which exercise he had ever taken in his life. He never rose above the awkward squad. The sergeant would warn the others when Coleridge was at drill, "Take care of that Cumberbatch — for he will ride over you!" Mr. Peter Bayne asks: "Was there ever since the days of the great hunter, such a private soldier? . . . Talk of Kilmenie among the rustics after her sojourn by the celestial streams: talk of Apollo amid the gaping herdsmen of Admetus: this of Coleridge among the dragoons beats them all." His identity was partially revealed when he wrote a Latin inscription on the stable wall, — "Eheu! quam infortunii miserrimum est fuisse felicem"; and the Captain became interested in him and pitying him in his plight made arrangements with his brother James, who was an

officer in the army, by which he might be released. He returned to Cambridge in April, 1794, where the only punishment he received was a censure by the Master in the presence of the Fellows. At Oxford he soon met Southey who was an ardent revolutionist, and they planned a new communal life in America. He spent his vacation travelling in Wales, visited Southey at Bristol where he met and became engaged to Sara Fricker, sister of the girl to whom Southey was engaged. Pantisocracy was expanded and Coleridge was to procure part of the funds by publishing some poems.

It is evident that this poem was written shortly before the visit to Wales, and that it reveals his sadness at the treatment he had received from Mary Evans, for the original draft of this poem, l. 4, had Mary, where now Lewti stands. Mr. Campbell tells us that in another early manuscript the name Sara appears. This change was made of course after his meeting Miss Fricker.

1794-1836.

THE FADED FLOWER.

First printed in *New Monthly Magazine*, August, 1836.

Coleridge now planned another poem in order to increase the funds at the disposal of the Pantisocrats — a Tragedy on the Fall of Robespierre. The Faded Flower was printed in the *New Monthly Magazine* in 1836 with a letter to Rev. Mr. Martin (to whom Robespierre was dedicated). This letter which was written in July 1794, alluded to the fact that during Coleridge's visit to Wales he saw Mary Evans only to think of her as the bride of another. Mr. Campbell thinks that the poem is not on this account to be considered as having anything to do with the events recorded in the letter.

1794-1794.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

From *The Fall of Robespierre*. Robespierre was printed 1794.

In September Coleridge took his tragedy to London in search of a publisher but could find none. He accordingly went to Cambridge where he was more successful and it was printed in October.

This exquisite song Coleridge printed by itself, and it has been so printed in many editions of his works since his time; as it would not be likely to become so well known if confined to the now little read tragedy.

1794-1796.

ON A DISCOVERY MADE TOO LATE.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796, an 'Effusion xxx' but in 'contents' was called *To My Other Heart*.

It is very evident that while Coleridge was away from Sara at Cambridge the old feeling toward Mary Evans returned, for in October he wrote this poem. Mr. Campbell thinks that Coleridge himself began the misunderstanding when on his enlistment he had suddenly broken off all relations with the family, because he suspected she loved another. The correspondence of this time given in Mr. Campbell's life of Coleridge reveals a most unfortunate situation, but no blame is to be attached to the conduct of Mary. This episode introduces us to a life history as pathetic as is to be found in that of any other English man of letters. Lamb wrote of this poem in 1796: "You came to town (from Cambridge late in 1794) and I saw at a time when your heart was bleeding with recent wounds. . . . You had

'Many an holy lay

That mourning, soothed the mourner on his way,'

I had ears of sympathy to drink them in."

Mr. Campbell says: "The last six lines are but a versification of a passage on an undated letter addressed to Mary Evans." Cf. Note to *A Faded Flower*.

Wordsworth in the meantime had been in close contact with the tumult in France; from the rubbish of the Bastille had gathered his relic and then passed in to join the bravest youths of France linked in gallant soldiery; and when the September massacres took place the terrible city became such a fascination to him, that had not his funds given out he would likely have perished with his friends. He returned to London in December, 1792. He visited the Isle of Wight where he saw the English fleet preparing to attack France, which caused him to pray for her defeat.

“ And, 'mid the simple worshippers, perchance
 I only, like an uninvited guest
 Whom no one owned, sate silent ; shall I add,
 Fed on the day of vengeance yet to come.”

But when later he saw France call in Napoleon he gave way to that inward searching which was his crisis. It was then 1794-5 while at Penrith with Calvert that he was returned to the dear sister who brought him “ back to the sweet counsels between head and heart.” Cf. Prelude — Book XI.

1794-1795.

LAFAYETTE.

First printed in the *Morning Chronicle*, 1794-5.

Coleridge left Cambridge without his degree in 1794 and went again to London, taking quarters in Newgate street near his old school, at the Salutation and the Cat. Here he had at least one friend who understood and sympathized with him, Charles Lamb. “ We sat together in the little smoky room through the winter nights beguiling the cares of life with Poesy,” writes Lamb two years later. During December 1794 and January 1795 he wrote sonnets on the political and literary character of the time, among which is this to Lafayette. These sonnets interest us chiefly as revealing the depth, but perhaps even more, the tumult of his Revolutionary feelings. This sonnet is in the manner of Milton rather than that of Bowles.

1794-1796.

TO A FRIEND — TOGETHER WITH AN UNFINISHED
 POEM.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796.

This poem was evidently the product of these weeks with Lamb, and occasioned by the fact that he was so often deprived of Lamb's company because of the terrible malady which afflicted his sister. Mr. Campbell thinks there is no doubt that the “ unfinished poem ” was *Religious Musings*. Lamb was proud of this friendship as is revealed in his letter to Coleridge in June, 1796, after the publication of Coleridge's first edition of poems. “ I was glad to

meet those lines you sent me when my sister was so ill. I had lost the copy and I felt not a little proud at seeing my name in your verse."

In a note to edition of *Poems*, 1803, Coleridge wrote : —

"I utterly recant the sentiment contained in the lines —

‘Of whose omniscient and all-spreading Love
Aught to *implore* were impotence of mind,’

it being written in Scripture, ‘Ask, and it shall be given you,’ and my human reason being moreover convinced of the propriety of offering *petitions* as well as thanksgivings to Deity."

1794, 1829–1834.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON, — LATEST VERSION.

First published in its present form in *Poems*, 1834, but it had appeared in various forms from 1794. Cf. note p. 300, et seq.

It was a little disturbing to Southey and the other Pantisocrats thus to be neglected by their comrade; they were not even kept informed as to his whereabouts. So in January Southey left Bristol to look him up. He found him at the Angel Inn in Butcher Hall Street and induced him to return with him. In February, Southey writes: "Coleridge is writing at the same table; our names are written in the book of destiny on the same page." Coleridge began a course of lectures on Philosophy and Politics, while Southey lectured on History. Money was needed and as they had the good fortune to become acquainted with Joseph Cottle, a Bristol publisher, an avenue was opened up for the publication of Coleridge's *Poems*. Through his lectures at Bristol on the French Revolution, Thomas Poole, a retired Bristol merchant became interested in the young poet. In *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, we find an interesting poem by Poole, the first stanza of which is : —

“Hail to the Coleridge, youth of various powers!
I love to hear thy soul pour forth the line,
To hear it sing of love and liberty
As if fresh-breathing from the hand divine.”

Rev. John Estlin of Bristol encouraged him to become a preacher, and he began at Bath preaching and lecturing.

The Monody written in 1790 was revised. It had appeared altered and enlarged in Launcelot Sharpe's edition of Chatterton's poems in 1794. After the edition of 1796 it was somewhat changed from time to time until 1829, when it received the form given here. Throughout the additions we can see that he has discarded the influence of Gray for that of Spenser.

Lines 121-124 are strangely prophetic of his life so like Chatterton's in many ways.

1795?-1796.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796.

We are now getting some genuinely picturesque and impassioned poems on nature in the place of the stilted and artificial etching of the previous years. Mr. Campbell says this poem "contains one superlatively good line — that which describes the night-watchman who infested the streets a century ago."

1. Cf. Milton, *To a Nightingale*.

Even while his head and heart were inhabiting this dreamland of hope and love, necessity with her harsh voice called him back to other worlds than that of Elysian Susquehanna, for he writes to Cottle: "Can you conveniently lend me five pounds, as we want a little more than four pounds to make up our lodging bill."

1795-1796.

COMPOSED WHILE ASCENDING THE LEFT ASCENT OF BROCKLEY COOMBE, SOMERSETSHIRE, MAY 1795.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796, as '*Effusion xxi*.'

He now has his feet on English grass and heather and his imagination does not disdain the common things that round him lie; he writes with his eye on the subject not on the form and the result is a luxury of poetic sights and sounds, — simple, fresh and life-giving. One has but to visit the scene of this poem to realize how true are its revelations.

1795-1796.

THE ÆOLIAN HARP.

First printed in *Poems*, 1796, as '*Effusion xxxv.*'

In the summer of 1795 the joint lodgings were given up, as estrangement was growing between the two enthusiasts. Cottle thinks this was mainly due to the fact that Coleridge had failed to keep his engagement on one occasion to lecture in the place of Southey.

Coleridge then took up lodgings at 25 College Street. Cottle had encouraged him so much that he felt like undertaking domestic life and consequently he was married to Sarah Fricker in Chatterton's old church, St. Mary Redcliffe in October, and went at once to the little cottage at Clevedon, a pretty spot on the bank of the Severn, and only a half day's walk from Bristol. How the honeymoon was spent in this primitive abode in which there were but scanty furnishings, and only Spartan fare, is revealed in the poet's letters of the time, in Cottle's *Reminiscences*, and in this poem, which I am bound to believe was written then, in spite of the fact that he gives the date as August.

It is interesting to know that at this very time Wordsworth and his sister were settling (only thirty miles away) at Racedown Lodge for their happy reunion after a long separation, nestling like two storm-tossed birds in this shy retreat remote from men. The world had been much with them both and now they were to begin that life with nature and those who teach as nature teachers.

In this blissful springtide we get the utterance of the poet in Coleridge as we have not had it before. We have hoped and believed but our faith has had no sure foundation in his actual work. Here is distinctive revelation that he has freed himself from the shackles of teachers and had become independent. In purely literary characteristics, vividness of description, melody and dignity of verse, grace and beauty of language, the young poet is unmistakably master, while in the more significant elements of poetry, his new life where the affections lead him on, and nature becomes alive with joy in sweetly human associations, we see the beginnings of that splendid apocalypse which is to be: the new life of man and nature, in which a hard dry naturalism is to be warmed and ennobled by the shaping power of the imagination and coarse

romance is to be refined and elevated by the power of truth. Under this magic spell of love and holy passion, there came to Coleridge not only new conceptions of man and nature but a new power of utterance, the most fascinating in melodious richness and natural magic in the history of English poetry.

The poem was changed somewhat in its various editions but the text here is substantially that of the original except that ll. 25-33 have been added.

1795-1796.

REFLECTIONS ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT.

First printed in *Monthly Magazine*, October, 1796.

“An epilogue to the Clevedon honeymoon worthy of the Prologue.” — J. D. Campbell.

We must remember that the lark which

“Singing, singing

With clouds and sky about it ringing”

builds its nest upon the ground and does not despise the earth where cares abound. We are glad that Coleridge had a brief period of unalloyed pleasure for which he seems to have been created, and we must not find fault that interests of the nest upon the ground called him back to the stern realities of life. Cottle was waiting for the promised volume of verse. He says: “Coleridge’s mind was in a singular degree distinguished for the habit of projecting. . . . To project with him was commonly sufficient. The execution, of so much consequence in the estimation of others, with him was a secondary point. I remember him once to have read to me, from his pocket book, a list of eighteen different works which he had resolved to write, and several of them in quarto, not one of which he ever effected. At the top of the list appeared, ‘Pantisocracy! 4to.’ (*Reminiscences*).

Southey had become estranged, and after marrying Edith Fricker had departed for Lisbon: thus the dream of a Pantisocracy fell in ruins. Clevedon was found too far from the Bristol library and in December was abandoned for Redcliffe Hill. We are not anxious to inquire into the reasons for all these experiences — preferring to leave that to those immoral critics who read moral object lessons on

the failings of great men — while we turn to the enjoyment of the work done. Mr. Alois Brandl happily calls the previous poem Coleridge's *L' Allegro* and the present one his *Il Penseroso*, but they are much more than Milton's in that sense in which the landscape poetry of the nineteenth century possesses its peculiar charm — its truth to the universal while at the same time keeping close to the local and the particular. In consequence of this we gain new and fresh insight into the mind and art of the poets when we wander with Cowper by the languid Ouse, with Crabbe in the Suffolk Coast, with Burns in Ayrshire, with Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Quantocks and the Lakes, and with Tennyson in Lincolnshire.

The original title was *Reflections on Entering into Active Life*. Lamb wrote immediately on reading it: "'Tis altogether the sweetest thing to me you ever wrote."

1796-1796.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY.

First printed in the *Watchman*, No. VI, April 11, 1796.

The need of funds became more pressing so his friends Cottle and Thomas Poole suggested the publication of a newspaper *The Watchman*, and in January, 1796, Coleridge set out on a journey north to procure subscriptions. During this journey he preached in various Unitarian pulpits — clad "in blue coat and white waistcoat, that no rag of the woman of Babylon might be seen on him." It was on this journey that this little poem was written for *The Watchman*.

l. 12. Chatterton.

1796 ?-1836.

TO ———.

First printed by H. N. Coleridge in *The Remains*, 1836, as a 'Fragment.'

This little poem cannot be accurately placed but Mr. Campbell gives the following note: "This perfect little poem was found in the 'Commonplace Book, c. 1795-1797' and printed by H. N. Coleridge as a 'Fragment' in the *Remains* (1, 280) Assuredly there is nothing fragmentary about it."

1796-1796.

TO A PRIMROSE, THE FIRST SEEN IN THE SEASON.

First printed in the *Watchman* No. VIII April 27, 1796.

"Rescued from the *Remains* (i. 47) from the *Watchman* No. VIII, April 27, 1796, — as presumably Coleridge's, though it has no signature. — J. Dykes Campbell.

1796-1797.

SONNET, TO A FRIEND, WHO ASKED HOW I FELT WHEN
THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED MY INFANT TO ME.

First printed in *Poems*, 1797.

This memorable year in Coleridge's life was to close with one more significant contribution to the Muse.

The long promised volume of poems appeared in April of this year and was on the whole favorably received. The first poem in the Contents was the Monody on Death of Chatterton and the last, Religious Musings. It contained fifty-one poems all but fifteen of which were classed as Effusions, among these were four sonnets by Lamb. In May the last number of *The Watchman* was published with a note, "The reason is short and satisfactory — the work does not pay expenses." Anticipating this collapse, Poole had collected a purse for the editor. Cf. *Thomas Poole and his Friends*, i. pp. 142-145. "When the purse arrived," says Mr. Campbell, "the cupboard was empty." Coleridge then engaged as assistant editor of the London *Morning Chronicle*, but his love for Bristol was too strong and he gave it up. Other plans were made but fell through. He visited his old home at Ottery: of this he writes: "I was received by my mother with transport, and by my brother George with joy and tenderness."

While on a visit to the Lloyds making arrangements to take Charles, one of their sons into his family, a son was born to him September 19. He hastened home taking his pupil with him.

His feelings on this occasion are revealed in three inconsiderable sonnets. I give the third of these chiefly for the beautiful last lines. It was addressed to Lamb, who, on receiving it, wrote: "I will keep my eyes open reluctantly a minute longer to tell you that I

love you for those simple, tender, heart flowing lines with which you conclude. . . . Cultivate simplicity, Coleridge. . . . I allow no hotbeds in the gardens of Parnassus."

As Coleridge at this time had great dislike for all sacramental rites, the child was not given baptism but named David Hartley, after the great philosopher, of whom he wrote in *Religious Musings* :

" Him of mortal kind
Wisest, he first who mark'd the ideal tribes
Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain
Pass in fine surges."

How his feelings toward the ordinances of the church mellowed as time went on may be seen from the following from *Table Talk*, August 9, 1832. "I think the baptismal service almost perfect. . . . None of the services of the church effect me so much as this."

1796 ?-1799.

LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, 1799.

I have placed this poem here for it is evident from Lamb's *Letters*, Ainger I, 31 that it existed in whole or in part thus early. Inasmuch as he has just visited his old home at Ottery, it is quite possible that it may have some connection with the memories there recalled. I have omitted the first three stanzas as quite unworthy of the others.

1. 16. Dear Annie, Mr. J. Dykes Campbell says : "The poem may well be a recast of some early verses for the 'dear Annie' to whom it is addressed may have been his favorite sister of that name whom he lost in 1791."

1796-1796.

ODE ON THE DEPARTING YEAR.

First printed in the *Cambridge Intelligence*, December 31, 1796.

Religious Musings and *Ode on the Destiny of Nations* belong to this year, and although they contain powerful lines they are full of

dazzling imagery ; but in this Ode written in December we find that he has begun to follow Lamb's advice as to pruning. It is not free from the faults of his masters in the old school but it is distinctly new in "impetuosity of transition, and fulness of fancy and feeling." The metrical movement is natural and graceful, in perfect harmony with the varying moods : a solemn symphony in words.

It was written for the *Cambridge Intelligencer* and was dedicated to Thomas Poole of Stowey. The Argument was added later.

l. 33. dread name. "The Name of Liberty, which at the commencement of the French Revolution was both the occasion and the pretext of remembered crimes." — S. T. C.

l. 40. Northern Conqueress. Empress of Russia who perpetrated the Massacre of Ismail.

l. 63. My soul beheld thy vision. "Thy image in a vision," S. T. C.

l. 135. Abandoned by heaven. "Of the one hundred and seven last years, fifty have been years of war." — S. T. C.

1797-1797.

TO THE REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE.

First printed in *Poems*, 1797.

This is the *annus mirabilis* in the life of Coleridge. He had a desire to get away from the life of the city, to be near Poole in the country. He writes : "My anxieties eat me up. I want consolation. My Friend ! My Brother ! Write and console me." Poole owned a little cottage at Stowey which at first he did not think suitable, but Coleridge begged so hard saying, "If we can but contrive to make two rooms *warm* and *wholesome* we will laugh in the faces of Gloom and Ill-lookingness," that he set about putting it in order. Coleridge moved hither on the last day of the year 1796, and wrote at once : "We are *very* happy, and my little David Hartley grows a sweet boy. I raise potatoes, and all manner of vegetables ; have an orchard, and shall raise corn enough for my family. We have live pigs, and ducks and geese." Poole's house was near at hand, their gardens joining.

Upon this cottage occupied by Coleridge there was put in 1893 a tablet inscribed, "Here Samuel Taylor Coleridge made his home 1797-1800," and funds have been raised to purchase it so that it

may be preserved as has been Dove Cottage the home of Wordsworth.

He now set about a second edition of his poems, with a few by Lamb and Lloyd; these were published in May, with this poem to his brother as 'Dedication.' Mr. Campbell says: "In a copy of the 1797 edition, now in the possession of Mr. Frederick Locker-Lampson, Coleridge has written underneath this Dedication as follows:—

'N. B. — If this volume should ever be delivered according to its direction, i. e. to Posterity, let it be known that the Reverend George Coleridge was displeased and thought his character endangered by this Dedication. — S. T. COLERIDGE.' "

This must be an error; he could not have taken displeasure at the dedication, but he might have disliked some of its contents. It is a tender and beautiful tribute to his brother, full of grace and sweetness, love and loyalty: grave and gay by turns, yet dignified and calm.

l. 10. Added in 1803.

l. 20. Coleridge on his N. Welsh tour of 1794, John Hucks, addressed some lines to him in his Poems, 1798, with this line,

"Deem not the friendship of your earlier days
False, tho' chance-started." — CAMPBELL.

l. 32. T. Poole.

ll. 63–64. Evidently allude to congratulatory verse sent Coleridge by George when he won the Browne medal for his *Sapphic Ode* at Cambridge.

1797–1800.

LINES TO WM. LINLEY, ESQ.

First printed in *Annual Anthology*, 1800.

Mr. Campbell says, "The original manuscript is dated 'Donhead, Sept. 12, 1797. To Mr. William Linley.' William Linley was the brother of the beautiful Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Sir Joshua's 'St. Cecilia.' "

1797–1809.

THE THREE GRAVES.

Parts III and IV were first printed in *The Friend* No. VI, Sept. 21, 1809.

Coleridge also wrote early in this year a tragedy *Osorio* for Sheridan at Drury Lane; and the life at Stowey was enlivened by visits of his friends, Lamb and his sister. At the same time he writes to Cottle: "The mice play the very devil with us. It irks me to set a trap. By all the whiskers of all the pussies that have mewed . . . since the days of Whittington, it is not fair." It was during these days that he began *The Three Graves*, which was not completed until 1809, when parts III and IV were printed in *The Friend* No. VI, Sept. 21. He called it 'A fragment of a Common Ballad-Tale,' saying, "Its merits, if any, are exclusively psychological." He had been reading of the effect of witchcraft on the negroes of the West Indies and on the Copper Indians, and wished to show that such effects were not confined to them.

Speaking of such revelations as we have in Coleridge's romantic poems Mr. George Dawson says: "It does appear to me that these strange and vague feelings are instruments to keep alive within us our faith in an unseen and spiritual world. We are content to feel it, and to hold it, when we have been argued out of it. These feelings, vague and mystic, fan the flame of faith, and keep it alive."

It is not known if Parts V and VI were ever written, but Mr. Campbell found Parts I and II in Coleridge's papers.

One needs only to read the previous poetry of the Churchyard School to see how far Coleridge has passed beyond anything which it suggests. Here is the beginning of that blank verse idyle carried to such perfection of artistic finish by Tennyson.

Coleridge continues the landscape art which he began at Clevedon and which makes the region of Stowey so interesting to the lover of his poems. We can also readily discover that he is sailing at least in the harbor of the perilous seas; the world of wonders was revealing to him its depths. It is the beginning of a group of poems of wondrous melody, and the most weirdly fascinating in revelations of the natural and supernatural to be found in literature.

It would be interesting to compare this work of Coleridge with that of Goethe after his period of Titanism and revolution in Goetz von Berlichingen and Werther had passed and he had learned that to build was better than to destroy.

Mr. Campbell says: "Much of the original manuscript copy from which *The Friend* was printed at Penrith is in the handwriting of Mrs. Wordsworth's sister Miss Sarah Hutchinson.

Part I, ll. 42-44. "Uncertain whether this stanza is erased, or merely blotted in the MSS." — J. D. CAMPBELL.

Carmen reliquum in futurum tempus relegatum. To-morrow ! and To-morrow ! and To-morrow ! — [Note of S. T. C. — 1815.]

1797-1800.

THIS LIME TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

First printed in *Annual Anthology*, 1800.

We now arrive at the most important event in Coleridge's life.

The Wordsworths had been living at Racedown, about thirty miles away, now for two years, and happy years they were, full of radiant enjoyment. They were separated from the world, but they had communion with each other and with nature. "With this, in their innocent frugality and courage, they faced the world like a new pair of babes in the wood." Coleridge, on hearing that the author of *Descriptive Sketches* was so near, took an early opportunity (in June) of visiting him. Dorothy tells us "the first thing that was read on that occasion was 'The Ruined Cottage' with which Coleridge was so much delighted ; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy *Osorio*. The next morning William read his tragedy *The Borderers*."

That this was a clear case of love at first sight is shown by the letters written to their friends at this time. Dorothy writes : "You had a great loss in not seeing Coleridge. He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind, and spirit. . . . He has more of 'the poet's eye in fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows and an overhanging forehead." Coleridge in his account of this visit says, "I speak with heartfelt sincerity, and, I think, unblinded judgment, when I tell you that I feel myself a little man by his side." When the Wordsworths returned this visit and went to Nether Stowey, Coleridge gives this beautiful picture of Dorothy : "W. and his exquisite sister are with me. She is a woman indeed ! in mind and heart ; for her person is such that if you expected to see a pretty woman, you would think her rather ordinary ; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty ! but her manners are

simple, ardent, impressive. In every motion her most innocent soul outbeams so brightly, that who saw would say

‘Guilt was a thing impossible to her.’

Her information various. Her eye watchful in minutest observation of nature; and her taste a perfect electrometer.” Wordsworth wrote, “Coleridge is the most *wonderful* man I ever met.”

They soon returned Coleridge’s visit and found Lamb and his sister at Stowey. While they were there Coleridge, unable to take the walks with them, wrote this poem as he was seated in the bower he called *Elysium*. Mrs. Sandford speaking of a meeting there with Cottle says: “And pretty Mrs. Coleridge coming out to join them with her boy in her arms appeared like a poetic embodiment of the idea of Woman, bringing with her the ‘smile of home’ to complete the charm of that delicious day.”

Mr. Richard Garnett says: “Coleridge was simply a great lyrical poet, who, throughout his *annus mirabilis* of 1797, and for some time afterwards, was in a state of joyous exaltation from the new world of poetry which had been disclosed to him by Wordsworth.”

An interesting subject for consideration in connection with the study of literature would be the work poets have done in developing patriotism by showing how much stronger and deeper is the love of country when thus associated with the love of home with its simple and substantial comforts and its endearments of natural associations — rivers, woods and hills, forests, lakes and vales: and also how by revealing the beauty of places in a country they have made it more beloved. There is fascinating wandering in Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England for one who wishes to read such poetry in the scenes of its birth, and such wandering is the very best lesson in political as well as literary history.

The region of Dorsetshire and Somersetshire, with a wealth of natural beauty, forest, and hills, cultivated farms, open sea prospect, and simple life, was an ideal place for the creation of such poetry as these enthusiasts on man, on nature and on human life desired to give to the world. In Dorothy’s letters and journal we have the best of guides in these delightful retreats. She writes: “There is everything here, — sea, woods, wild as fancy ever painted, brooks, clear and pebbly as in Cumberland; villages

romantic . . . the deer dwell here and sheep, so that we have a living prospect. . . . Wherever we turn we have woods, smooth downs, and valleys with small brooks running down them, through green meadows, hardly ever intersected with hedgerows, but scattered ever with trees. The hills that cradle these valleys are either covered with fern and bilberries, or oak woods, walks extend for miles over the hilltops; the great beauty of which is their wild simplicity."

1797-1798.

FIRE, FAMINE AND SLAUGHTER.

"*The Scene a desolated Tract in La Vendée. FAMINE is discovered lying on the ground; to her enter FIRE and SLAUGHTER.*"

First printed in the *Morning Post*, Jan. 8, 1798.

As early as 1794 Coleridge became very bitter in denunciation of the policy of Burke and Pitt and wrote a sonnet upon each of these leaders full of venom. These he afterwards recalled in edition of 1797. In a note to the sonnet on Burke he said: "Peace be to his spirit when he departs from us; this is the severest punishment I wish him—that he may be appointed under-porter to St. Peter and be obliged to open the gates of heaven to Brissot, Roland, Condorcet, Fayette and Priestley."

It was natural, therefore, that when he published this poem it should have been regarded as a continuance of that old controversy, but when he learned this he wrote an Apologetic Preface to the edition of 1817 in which he said: "I have merely generalized the causes of the war, and thus personified the abstract and christened it by the name which I have been accustomed to hear most often associated with its management and measures. I have had as little notion of a real person of flesh and blood 'distinguishable in number, joint and limb,' as Milton had in the grim and terrible phantoms (half person, half allegory) which he has placed at the Gates of Hell."

In Cottle's *Reminiscences* p. 16 there is an interesting letter from Liberty to Famine which Coleridge recited at one of his Anti-Pittite lectures in Bristol 1795, which has a direct relation to the poem.

1797-8-1816.

KUBLA KHAN.

First published in 1816 with the title *Kubla Khan : or A Vision in a Dream* in the same pamphlet which contained *Christabel* and *The Pains of Sleep*.

How Coleridge's genius responded to the magical influence of the new life which came through Wordsworth is one of the most interesting bits of literary history which the world has ever seen. With what joyous exaltation he enters into the new world of life and art, is revealed in this poem in which the melody of unearthly music bears us into a realm where we are laid asleep in body and become a living soul. It is but a fragment — "a splendid curiosity, a lyrical landscape fairy tale."

It was suggested by an account given in Purchas' *Pilgrimage* of a palace of the thirteenth century which belong to the Tartar Khan, Kublai. With its history is associated an experience of singular nature. Being in ill-health he retired to a farmhouse between Porlock and Linton. While there an anodyne was prescribed and after reading Purchas' *Pilgrimage* he fell asleep and composed several hundred lines "without any sensation or consciousness of effort." On awakening he took pen to write them down and while thus employed was called out by a visitor who detained him an hour, and when he returned the remainder of the vision had perished.

l. 1-5. Leigh Hunt says: "What a grand flood is this, flowing down through measureless caverns to a sea without a sun! I know no other sea equal to it except Keats' in his *Ode to a Nightingale*."

Lamb in 1816 wrote of Coleridge's recitation of the *Kubla Khan* — "which said vision he repeats so enchantingly that it irradiates and brings heaven and Elysian bowers into my parlour when he sings or says it . . . his face when he repeats his verses hath its ancient glory; an archangel a little damaged."

Of Coleridge's poems of which *Kubla Khan* is a type Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "They stand alone, and all lovers of poetry keep them in their heart. They are as lovely as they are love-begetting, and while the world lasts they will ravish the imagina-

tion of men. Their music is perfect, and the spirit of them is as akin to childhood as to age. The lover loves them though they do not speak of love. The lover of wisdom loves them though they do not speak of philosophy. The lover of Nature loves them, though they speak, only incidentally, of Nature, and all lovers of folklore, from those wild men who peopled the Universe with beings who were not themselves, to us who recollect these tales, that we may live in that alluring world, love them or would have loved them dearly."

There is some doubt as to the exact date of this poem but it belongs to that joyous time of 1797-8.

1797, 8-1798.

THE ANCIENT MARINER.

First printed anonymously in First Edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798.

After reading the expressions of delight of these two young men in each other, we are not surprised that a month later the Wordsworths removed to Alfoxden near Nether Stowey, Somersetshire, where Coleridge resided.

The poets rambled over the Quantock Hills and held high communion. During one of these excursions, feeling the need of money, they planned a joint production for the *New Monthly Magazine*. They set about the work in earnest, and selected as a subject the *Ancyent Marinere*, founded upon a dream of one of Coleridge's friends. Coleridge supplied most of the incidents and almost all the lines. Wordsworth contributed the incident of the killing of the albatross and a few of the lines. They soon found that their methods did not harmonize, and the *Marinere* was left to Coleridge, while Wordsworth wrote upon the common incidents of everyday life. When the *Marinere* was finished Wordsworth had so many pieces ready that they concluded to publish a joint volume, and this they did under the title *Lyrical Ballads*, with the *Rime of the Ancyent Marinere* heading the volume. We will let each one give his version of this eventful undertaking.

In the manuscript notes which Wordsworth left we find this record:—

"In the autumn of 1797, Mr. Coleridge, my sister, and myself

started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon with a view to visit Linton and the Valley of Stones near to it ; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem to be sent to the *New Monthly Magazine*. Accordingly, we set off, and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet ; and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the *Ancient Mariner* founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank. Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention, but certain parts I suggested ; for example, some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been reading in Shelvocke's *Voyages*, a day or two before, that while doubling Cape Horn, they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.' The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least, not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together on that, to me, memorable evening. I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular.

' And listened like a three years' child :
The Mariner had his will.'

These trifling contributions, all but one, which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, —

' And thou art long and lank, and brown
As is the ribbed sea-sand,' —

slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respec-

tive manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. . . . The *Ancient Mariner* grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds ; and we began to think of a volume which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects."

Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria*, Chap. XIV. says : —

"During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset, diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect) that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural ; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life ; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them when they present themselves.

"In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*, in which it was agreed that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic ; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of

novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

"With this view I wrote the *Ancient Mariner*, and was preparing, among other poems, the *Dark Ladie*, and the *Christabel*, in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the *Lyrical Ballads* were published."

TRANSLATION OF THE MOTTO FROM BURNET.

I readily believe that there are more invisible beings in the universe than visible. But who will explain to us the nature of all these, the rank, relationships, distinguishing characteristics and functions of each? What is it they do? Where is it they dwell? Always human thought circles around the knowledge of these mysteries, never touching the centre. Meanwhile it is, I confess, oftentimes well pleasing to behold sketched upon the mind, as upon a tablet, a picture of the greater and better world; so shall the spirit, wonted to the petty concerns of daily life, not narrow itself overmuch, nor sink utterly into trivialities. But meanwhile we must diligently seek truth, and maintain a temperate judgment, if we would distinguish certainty from uncertainty, day from night.

T. Burnet: *Archæol. Phil.*, p. 68.

The *Ancient Mariner* was first printed anonymously in the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, with the title: *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner in Seven Parts*. An Advertisement, which was the germ of Wordsworth's famous *Prefaces*, and an Argu-

ment, introduced the poem. In the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), the title was changed to *The Ancient Mariner, a Poet's Reverie*. The Argument was altered, the text was much changed, and the extreme archaisms in spelling disappeared. The text was reprinted in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1802 and 1805, but the Argument was omitted. It next appeared in *Sibylline Leaves*, with the Motto from Burnet, a few changes of text, the element of the horrible made less prominent, the marginal gloss added, and the Argument of 1798 restored.

The *Ancient Mariner* and *Christabel* are charged with the spirit of the old romance, which returned to England in the ballad literature of Percy's *Reliques*, Macpherson's *Ossian* and the imaginative mediævalism of Chatterton.

"In Coleridge personally," says Mr. Walter Pater, "this taste had been encouraged by his odd and out-of-the-way reading in the old-fashioned literature of the marvellous — books like Purchas's *Pilgrims*, early voyages like Hakluyt's, old naturalists and visionary moralists, like Thomas Burnet, from whom he quotes the motto of the *Ancient Mariner*. Fancies of the strange things which may very well happen, even in broad daylight, to men shut up alone in ships far off on the sea, seem to have occurred to the human mind in all ages with a peculiar readiness."

Mr. J. Dykes Campbell says that besides the indebtedness to a dream of their Stowey friend Cruikshank, the passage in Shelvocke, and the handling of the ship by the spirits, Mr. J. F. Nicholls, City Librarian of Bristol, has suggested a very probable hint from Captain Thomas James's *Strange and Dangerous Voyage . . . in his Intended Discovery of the North-West Passage into the South Sea*: London, 1633. Mr. Nicholls says: "It is very likely indeed that S. T. Coleridge, who was a regular frequenter of our City Library, devised his marrow-chilling scenes depicted in that unique and immortal poem, *The Ancient Mariner*, from Captain James's *Strange and Dangerous Voyage*. Mr. Ivor James, in an article, *The Source of the Ancient Mariner* (*Athenæum*, 1890), makes much of this theory."

Still, again, it has been suggested that the idea may have been stimulated by "The Letter of Saint Paulinus to Macarius, in which he relates astounding wonders concerning the shipwreck of an old man." This document is to be found in La Bigne's *Magna*

Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum, 1618. In this story the old man is the sole survivor of the ship's crew; the ship was navigated by a "Crew of Angels," "steered by the Pilot of the World to the Lucanian Shore."

While it is not impossible that Coleridge derived some hints from the above, yet I fancy he would say to all this wool gathering as did Tennyson: "There is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us — editors of booklets, book-worms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination — who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that he, too, has no imagination, but is forever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate."

The natural analogy to this influence of early associations upon Coleridge is to be found in the life of Scott. Scott was born in literary Edinburgh, but on account of physical infirmity he was early taken to the farm of his paternal grandfather at Sandyknowe, on the slopes of Smailholm crags. At the summit of the crags stood the grim old sentinel, Smailholm tower, guarding the Borderland, where "every field has its battle and every rivulet its song." Not far away was the venerable Abbey of Dryburgh, the Eildons, and the stretches of Lammermoor, Melrose, "like some tall rock with lichens gay," almost encircled by the Tweed, while the vales of Ettrick and Yarrow, fragrant with song and ballad, could be seen in the distance.

" And rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story."

Such were the sights that fed the wandering eyes of Scott's infancy and boyhood, while his ear was trained to ballad, song, and story by the grandmother and her auld gudeman. His aunt fired his imagination by the tales of Jamie Telfer, Wat of Harden, wight Willie, and by the old ballads. "Hardiknute," says Scott, "was the first poem I ever learnt, and the last I shall ever forget." Scott confesses his indebtedness to Coleridge.

"Coleridge's beautiful and tantalizing fragments of *Christabel* (then in MS.), which, from the irregularity of the stanzas, and the liberty which it allowed the author to adapt the sound to the

sense, seemed to be exactly suited to such an extravaganza as I meditated, and it is to Mr. Coleridge that I am bound to make the acknowledgment due from the pupil to his master."

PART I.

Compare other sea poetry with this poem ; the grand old ballad of *Sir Patrick Spens*, Tennyson's *The Revenge*, *The Sailor Boy*, and Longfellow's *Wreck of the Hesperus*.

The *Ancient Mariner* is in direct line with that remarkable strain of the sea in English poetry, which extends from the *Wanderer* to Kipling's *Seven Seas*.

Coleridge says of his early home :

" We could hear
At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur."

13. *He holds him with his glittering eye.* Coleridge was remarkable for his power to attract listeners to his marvellous conversation. At Christ's Hospital and at Cambridge his large grey eye sparkled with a noble madness which held his comrades as if by magic. Of his later power in the same direction, Carlyle says : " He distinguished himself to all that ever heard him as at least the most surprising talker extant in this world. His thoughts did not seem to come with labour and effort, but as if borne on the gusts of genius, and as if the wings of his imagination lifted him from his feet."

Wordsworth alludes to him as

" The rapt one of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature."

" Let the dullest clod that ever vegetated," says Christopher North, " be shut up in a room with Coleridge, or in a wood, and subjected for a few minutes to the ethereal influence of that wonderful man's monologue, and he will begin to believe himself a poet. . . . While he is discoursing, the world loses all its common-places, and you and your wife imagine yourself Adam and Eve listening to the affable Archangel, Raphael, in the Garden of Eden."

In *My First Acquaintance with the Poets*, Hazlitt alludes to a visit of Coleridge to his father's house in 1798. He says :

"When the poet preacher took leave I accompanied him six miles on the road. It was a fine morning in the middle of winter, and he talked the whole way. The scholar in Chaucer is described as going

"—— Sounding on his way."

So Coleridge went on his. In digressing, in dilating, in passing from subject to subject, he appeared to me to float in air, to slide on ice. . . . On my way back I had a sound in my ears — it was the voice of Fancy ; I had a light before me — it was the face of Poetry."

This stanza was contributed by Wordsworth.

25-28. *The sun came up*, etc. What is the effect of the monosyllabic words here ?

41-44. *And now the Storm-blast came*, etc. Mr. J. Dykes Campbell has changed the gloss here from *drawn*, as most editions give it, to *driven*. The Storm-blast *chased* the ship along, and hence *driven* seemed the natural word to use here.

51-70. *And now there came*, etc. Mr. Traill says : "The details of the voyage are all chronicled with such order and regularity, there is such a diary-like air about the whole thing, that we accept it almost as if it were a series of extracts from a ship's log. Mr. J. Dykes Campbell gives the following data from the log of Captain James' 'Northwest passage.' The reader may judge as to the probability that Coleridge had read them.

" 'All day and all night it snowed hard ;' 'the nights are very cold ; so that our rigging freezes ;' 'It proved very thick fowle weather, and the next day we found ourselves encompassed about with ice ;' 'We had ice not farre off about us, and some pieces as high as our Top-mast-head ;' 'We heard the rutt against a bank of ice that lay on the shoare. It made a hollow and hideous noise ;' 'The ice cracked all over the Bay with a fearfull noyse.' "

63. Suggested by Wordsworth.

79-82. *God save thee*, etc. Cf. *The Raven*.

PART II.

97, 98. *Nor dim nor red*, etc. Professor Dowden says of these two lines : "The sunrise at sea is like the solemn apparition of one of the chief actors in the drama of crime, and agony, and

expiation, and in the new sense of wonder with which we witness that oldest spectacle of the heavens we can well believe in other miracles."

104. *The furrow followed free.* In *Sibylline Leaves* (1817) the line was printed —

"The furrow stream'd off free."

And Coleridge added this footnote, "In the former editions the line was —

"The furrow follow'd free,"

but I had not been long on board the ship before I perceived that this was the image as seen by a spectator from the shore or from another vessel. From the ship itself the *wake* appears like a brook flowing off from the stern." In the edition of 1828 and later ones the earlier reading was restored.

119-122. *Water, water, everywhere*, etc. Cf. *Tempest*, Act iii. Sc. 3.

127-130. *About, about*, etc. A touch of Middleton and Shakespeare here.

"Black spirits and white ;
Red spirits and gray ;
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may."

Thomas Middleton, *The Witch*.

"Fair is foul and foul is fair :
Hover through the fog and filthy air."

Macbeth, Act i. Sc. 1.

PART III.

164. *They for joy did grin.* "I took the thought of *grinning for joy* from my companion's (Berdmare of Jesus Coll., Cambridge) remark to me when we had climbed to the top of Plinlimmon, and were fairly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me, 'You grinned like an idiot !' He had done the same." — *Table Talk*, May 31, 1830.

184. *Gossameres.* The fine film network to be seen in the air on summer evenings. The old legend says these are the remnants of the Virgin Mary's winding sheet, which fell from her when she was translated.

185-189. *Are those her ribs*, etc. A MS. correction by Coleridge of the corresponding stanza in edition of 1798 was, —

“ Are those *her* ribs which fleck'd the sun
Like bars of a dungeon grate?
Are those two all, all of the crew,
That woman and her mate? ”

“ The following stanza was found in Coleridge's handwriting on the margin of a copy of the Bristol (1798) edition of *Lyrical Ballads*. ”—J. Dykes Campbell.

“ This ship it was a plankless thing,
A bare Anatomy!
A plankless Spectre, and it mov'd
Like a being of the Sea!
The woman and a fleshless man
Therein sate merrily.”

“ The two palpable intruders from a spiritual world in almost all ghost literature—in Scott and Shakespeare even—have a kind of crudity or coarseness. Coleridge's power is in the very fineness with which, as by some really ghostly finger, he brings home to our inmost sense his inventions, daring as they are.”—Walter Pater.

193. *The Night-mare*, etc.

“ The Night-mare Life-in-Death, she it was who, with her numbing spell, haunted Coleridge himself in after days.”—Dowden.

In the edition of 1798, after this stanza will be found another very gruesome and hideous. “ Coleridge felt,” says Professor Dowden, “ that these hideous incidents of the grave only detracted from the finer horror of the voluptuous beauty of his white devil, the Night-mare Life-in-Death.”

199-202. *The Sun's rim dips*, etc. Lowell alludes to these lines as having the “ unashamed nakedness of Scripture, of the Eden of diction ere the voluble serpent had entered it.”

201-208. *With far-heard whisper*, etc. Mr. J. Dykes Campbell gives another cast of these lines found in some papers of Coleridge, dated 1806, 1807, 1810.

“ With never a whisper on the main
Off shot the spectre ship :

And stifled words and groans of pain
 Mix'd on each murmuring lip.
 trembling

And we look'd round, and we look'd up,
 And fear at our hearts, as at a cup,
 The Life-blood seem'd to sip —
 The sky was dull, and dark the night,
 The helmsman's face by his lamp gleam'd bright,
 From the sails the dews did drip."

222, 223. *And every soul*, etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. 1.
King. 'How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!'
Macbeth, Act ii. Sc. 1:
Macb. 'How is 't with me, when every noise appals me?'

PART IV.

224-227. *I fear thee*, etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, Act i. Sc. 3, 18-25:

"I will drain him dry as hay," etc.

"For the last two lines of this stanza I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth." Note of S. T. C. — *Sibylline Leaves*.

232-235. *Alone, alone*, etc. The terror of this scene is equal to that of *Macbeth*, Act v. Sc. 1, the Sleep-walking Scene; and *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. B. 3, where the King is at prayer.

244, 245. *I looked to Heaven*, etc. Cf. *Hamlet*, Act iii. Sc. 3:

"Pray can I not,
 Though inclination be as sharp as will:
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent."

248-256. *I closed my lids*, etc. Cf. Tennyson, *Palace of Art*:

"But in dark corners of her palace stood
 Uncertain shapes!" etc.

257, 258. *An orphan's curse*, etc. Cf. *Æschylos, Choephora*, Ant. i.:

"Full clear a spectre came
 That made each single hair to stand on end," etc.

259, 260. *But oh! more horrible*, etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, Act iii. Sc. 4.

263-266. *The moving Moon*, etc. For equally clear observation of Nature, cf. *Christabel*, Part the First. Read the gloss here carefully for additional illustration of imaginative power.

267, 268. *Her beams bemocked*, etc. Cf. *Frost at Midnight*.

274-276. *They moved*, etc. Coleridge has the eye of a scientist here. Cf. *Christabel*, Part the Second :

“ A snake’s small eye blinks dull and shy,” etc.

“ In these monsters he seems to have particular interest, and to have consulted various zoölogical works ; for the note book of this date contains long paragraphs upon the alligators, boas, and crocodiles of antediluvian times.”—Alois Brandl.

279-287. *Blue, glossy green*, etc. “ Coleridge’s strange creatures of the sea are not the hideous worms which a vulgar dealer in the supernatural might have invented. Seen in a great calm by the light of the moon, these creatures of God are beautiful in the joy of their life.”—E. Dowden.

288-291. *The self-same moment*, etc. Here is the dramatic centre of the story, as in Shakespeare’s five-act plays it is in the third act.

PART V.

305-308. *I moved*, etc. “ Certainly there are strange things in the other world, and so there are in all the steps to it ; and a little *glimpse* of Heaven,—a moment’s conversing with an angel,—any ray of God, any communication from the Spirit of Comfort, which God gives to his servants in strange and unknown manners, are infinitely far from illusions. We shall understand them when we feel them, and when, in new and strange needs, we shall be refreshed by them ” (Note-book, p. 27).

318-326. *And the coming wind*, etc. The minute realism of description here reveals Coleridge’s sensitive apprehension of natural scenery.

359. *I heard the skylark sing*.

Cf. Wordsworth, *To a Skylark* ; Shelley, *To a Skylark*.

The last stanza suggests the special revelation of nature which it was the mission of Wordsworth and Coleridge to give. Cf. Wordsworth, *It was an April Morning*, *The Leech Gatherer*, *Lines on Early Spring*.

Coleridge often upbraids those poets who project themselves into nature. Cf. *The Nightingale*.

402-405. *The spirit*, etc.

“ But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee ;
And the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee ;
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee ;
And the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee ;
Who knoweth not in all these
That the hand of the Lord hath wrought this.”

Job, *First Cycle of Speeches*.

PART VI.

446-451. *Like one, that on a lonesome road*, etc. This stanza introduces us into the realm of the supernatural much as does Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Mr. Stopford Brooke says : “ I never met a sailor whose ship had been among the lonely places of the sea who did not know of these hauntings.”

467. *Is this mine own countree ?*

Cf. *Fears in Solitude*.

472-479. *The harbor-bay*, etc. The quiet of the harbor is the symbol of return to the life of love after the storms of sin.

“ How pleasantly, how reassuringly, the whole night-mare story is made to end among the clear, fresh sounds and lights of the bay where it began.”—Walter Pater.

490, etc. *A mass all light*, etc. The idea of working the ship by this means was suggested by Wordsworth.

500-504. *But soon I heard*, etc. Mr. J. Dykes Campbell says that in a copy of the edition of 1798 Coleridge crossed out the stanza which followed this, and wrote in the margin the following :

“ Then vanish'd all the lovely sights,
The spirits of the air ;
No souls of mortal men were they,
But spirits bright and fair.”

510, 511. *He singeth*, etc.

“ He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.”

Wordsworth, *Poet's Epitaph*.

514-518. *This Hermit*, etc. Cf. *Christabel*, Part II.

535. *Ivy-tod*: ivy-bush or clump.

“The wealthy miller’s early face
Like the moon in an ivy-tod.”

Tennyson, *The Miller’s Daughter*, 1833.

PART VII.

560-569. *I moved my lips*, etc. How marvellously, and as it were by a single stroke, does Coleridge create for us the physical effects of the mariner’s long agony, when he makes the sight of him so startling and tragic.

578-581. *Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched*.

“Remorse is as the heart in which it grows;
If that be gentle, it drops balmy dews
Of true repentance; but if proud and gloomy
It is a poison-tree, that pierced to the inmost,
Weeps only tears of poison.”

Remorse, Act i. Sc. 1.

584, 585. *And, till my ghastly tale is told*, etc. Cf. Wordsworth:

“A timely utterance gave that thought relief—
And I again am strong.”

601-609. *O, sweeter than the marriage-feast*, etc. Cf. Tennyson’s *The Two Voices*, 549-624.

614-618. *He prayeth best*, etc. Cf. Coleridge:

“There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
Truth of subliming import! with the which
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul
He from his small particular orbit flies
With blest outstarting! from himself he flies,
Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze
Views all creation; and he loves it all,
And blesses it, and calls it very good!”

Religious Musings.

Cf. Wordsworth :

“ The Being, that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.”

Hart-Leap Well.

Valentine Le Grice, one of Coleridge's Cambridge friends, expressed in his commemoration speech the creed of the young poets. “ The end of poetry is to delight, to ennoble, to elevate, and improve the heart. Let us therefore contemplate nature with the eye of Thomson, stimulate our energy by Gray, awaken our finer feelings by Bowles, lose ourselves in sympathy with Burns, and enlarge our higher sentiment with Cowper.”

In the following noble passage from Cardinal Newman we have the same idea as that which Coleridge voices :

“ Can anything,” says Newman, “ be more marvellous or startling, unless we were used to it, than that we should have a race of beings about us whom we do but see, and as little know their state, or can describe their interests, or their destiny, as we can tell of the inhabitants of the sun and moon ? It is indeed a very overpowering thought, when we get to fix our minds on it, that we familiarly use, I may say, hold intercourse with creatures who are as much strangers to us, as mysterious, as if they were fabulous, unearthly beings.”

“ We are sharers not only of animal but of vegetable life ; sharers with the higher brute animals in common instincts and feelings and affections. . . . I fancy that human beings may be more humane when they realize that, as their dependent associates live a life in which man has a share, so they have rights which man is bound to respect.”— Prof. Asa Gray, *Natural Science and Religion*.

“ The spirit of Romance that came as the salvation of modern poetry found magical expression in *The Ancient Mariner*. Old age renews itself with memories of youth ; and the inspiration of the new life of poetry was from the far-off fields and fountains of the neglected folk-lore of the North. In *The Ancient Mariner* are the two great elements of the folk-tale : love of the marvellous — the supernatural — and love of the lower animals. Wonder is

the essence of both, and both are of the essence of religion. True to the world's heart is the recognition of something *real* above and beyond the *actual* in life; equally true is the reverent awe with which primitive men regarded the migrations and strange instincts of birds and beasts. When man did animals a favor, knowledge of their language was revealed to him, and they saved him from the perils of the forest, the morass, and the flood. Love reads the secret of Nature. Man is not placed in a dead world, but in a universe where living links bind order to order; where there are duties as well as rights; and where, if duties are neglected, interests are injured."—E. Charlton Black.

1797, 1800-1816.

CHRISTABEL.

First printed in a pamphlet with *Kubla Khan* and *The Pains of Sleep*, 1816.

The more we read the poems of this eventful year the more we wonder how it was that Wordsworth and his gifted sister influenced Coleridge, and yet the fact is everywhere evident. The essential spirit of poetry has never been more clearly revealed than in these poems, which conduct us to the heights of the English Romantic Movements. There was hardly a suggestion of the ineffable charm, the spiritual vision and natural magic of these poems in any work of his before the meeting with the quiet, wholesome and homely children of the North country. They are of imagination all compact, and wither at the frosty breath of critical analysis.

We are a bit surprised at the influence which came to him from Wordsworth, and when we ask those who know these poets best just what the influence was, they leave us still in wonder. Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "The moment Coleridge, under Wordsworth's influence, began to express himself only for the pleasure he had in his emotion, or to shape the beauty he saw for the love of it alone, he ceased to be the man of talent and rose into the man of genius. . . . It was the influence of a more original, of a simpler and steadier swell in another, of one who had better principles of art rooted in him than Coleridge had found as yet, and of one who had already re-conceived and reopened the deep sources of poetry." Mr. Richard Garnett says: "Wordsworth assuredly did not teach

Coleridge out of a book, and Coleridge's regeneration can be ascribed to nothing else than the perception that his friend was leading where he could follow him. He came after Wordsworth as one bird might follow another through an open window — a bird of more gorgeous plumage certainly, though not of sweeter voice.

Mr. J. Dykes Campbell says: "It was a rich and fruitful time for all three — seed-time at once and harvest; and its happy influences spread far beyond their own individual selves. The gulf-stream which rose in the Quantocks warmed and is still warming distant shores. Dorothy's quick sympathy, keen observation, and rapid suggestion were invaluable to both. . . . Nor was the influence, in action and reaction, of the men on one another less potent. Coleridge was by far the more active, as well as the finer and more penetrating, and the immense receptiveness of Wordsworth must have acted as a strong incentive to its exercise. And this is true, I believe, notwithstanding that there are more distinct traces of Wordsworth's influence on Coleridge's poetry than of the converse." Mr. Alois Brandl says: "The two new friends were very unlike; they did not rush into each other's arms like two ardent, raw youths, but they grasped each other by the hand with a feeling of profound mutual recognition. Coleridge was the ivy which at last found the oak on which it could lean and unfold its luxuriance."

In 1801 Coleridge wrote: "If I die and the booksellers will give you anything for my life, be sure to say: 'Wordsworth descended on him like a *Γνώθ σεαυτόν* from heaven, by showing to him what true poetry was, he made him know that he himself was no Poet.'"

Of the influence of Coleridge on Wordsworth we have evidence throughout the *Prelude*, where the most touching tributes to his capacious soul, prompt sympathy, and quick intuition are to be found in every book.

In the delightful associations of the Quantocks where they "wanton in wild poesy," beauty came to Coleridge in the garb of truth, while to Wordsworth truth came in the attire of beauty. Coleridge became the poetic philosopher, Wordsworth the philosophic poet.

The history of literature gives us no more interesting or suggestive picture than that of the friendship of these two men. A study

of the means by which this love was fostered and sustained, and in consequence of which each attained heights from which is shed ever-enduring radiance, cannot fail to be rewarding.

The *Alfoxden Journal* of Dorothy reveals many sights and sounds which became the common property of both poets, and each would have subscribed to the sentiment, "She gave me eyes, she gave me ears," of Wordsworth's later poem. We find the following characteristic touches in the *Journal*: "William called me into the garden to observe a singular appearance about the moon. A perfect rainbow, within the bow one star, only of colours more vivid. . . . Walked to Stowey with Coleridge, returned by woodlands. . . . Walked alone to Stowey. Returned in the evening with Coleridge. Went to Stowey with Coleridge, heard the nightingale." . . . Lines 49-54 are given as follows in the *Journal*: "Only one leaf upon the top of the tree, the sole remaining leaf danced round like a rag blown by the wind." Again, lines 16-20 appear as follows: "When we left home the moon was immensely large, the sky scattered over with clouds. These soon closed in, contracting the dimensions of the moon without concealing her." The baron's mastiff may be in this sketch: "The manufacturer's dog makes a strange, uncouth howl, which it continues many minutes, after there is no noise near it but that of the brook. It howls at the murmur of the village stream. We walked in the woods into the Coombe to fetch some eggs. The whole appearance of the woods was enchanting, and each tree, taken singly, was beautiful." For a revelation of what William was doing we must read the *Lyrical Ballads*, especially the poem which is related to his mind and art as *Christabel* is to that of Coleridge—*Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*.

While we are considering the mutual influence of these three friends we must not forget that other which came from the gentle and frolicsome Lamb. This was more immediate and direct upon Coleridge than upon the Wordsworths, but it was not more sympathetic or helpful. The world can never know the full significance of this joyous and radiant comradeship. In the cheerful talk of the patient toiler at the India House, in the wizard fascination of the dreamer of dreams, and the healing calm of the child of Nature, we feel something of mighty impulse which helped life onward in its noblest aim.

Mr. Gillman says Coleridge told him that *Christabel* was founded on the notion that the "virtuous of this world save the wicked."

We know that the poets pre-eminently dear to Wordsworth, Lamb and Coleridge were the great masters of human passion, intellectual vigor, penetrative imagination, and bewitching melody, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. *Kubla Khan*, *The Ancient Mariner*, and *Christabel* therefore naturally enough breathe the finest atmosphere of these poets while having a life unborrowed and their own. *The Faerie Queene*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Comus*, all contribute something of the natural and supernatural to the divine philosophy of these inimitable creations. Imaginative conception and technical expression are in perfect harmony.

In *Kubla Khan* the natural prevails, in *The Ancient Mariner* natural and supernatural penetrate through the medium of the human, while in *Christabel* the supernatural element is supreme: —

"It springs as a level of bowery lawn,
And the mountain draws it from Heaven above,
And it sings a song of undying love."

The spirit of the old romantic ballads is here refined and made subtle by delicate modern reflection.

Lowell, in speaking of Coleridge's best work, says: "It seems pure, visual ecstasy, the very beatitude of tireless simplicity, and is the most finished product of art. I know nothing so perfect of its kind since Dante."

William Watson says: "The First Part of *Christabel* is not less wonderful than *The Ancient Mariner* in its power of producing an equally full and rich effect by infinitely more frugal means."

Only the Part First of the poem was written at Stowey, 1797, 8 — the others were written at the Lakes in 1800. Lamb dreaded a continuation, lest the heavy foot of fact should tread upon the rustling train of romance. This heavy foot is what levels down the parts written later.

Mr. A. C. Swinburne, in an essay which every student of Coleridge should have by heart, has said of the poems of this period: "When it has been said that such melodies were never heard, such dreams never dreamed, and such speech never spoken,

the chief thing remains unsaid and unspeakable. There is a charm upon these poems which can only be felt in silent submission of wonder. Were we compelled to the choice I for one would rather preserve *Kubla Khan* and *Christabel* than any other of Coleridge's poems. . . . The former is the most wonderful of the poems, while the loveliest is assuredly *Christabel*."

1. 238. Leigh Hunt, in "What is Poetry," cites this line as illustrating that type of imagination 'which by a single expression, apparently of the vaguest kind, not only meets but surpasses in effect the extremest force of most particular description.' He says: "A perfect verse surely, both for feeling and music. The very smoothness and gentleness of the lines is in the series of the letter l's." As to the music of *Christabel*, he says: "Coleridge restored the octo-syllabic measure to the beautiful freedom of which it was capable. He varied it with alternate rhymes and stanzas, with rests and omissions analogous to those in music."

The history of the various attempts to complete the poem, the alterations and explanations covering a period of nearly twenty years, must be read in Mr. J. Dykes Campbell's edition of the poet's works, 1893.

Scott heard *Christabel* recited by John Stoddart at Lasswade in 1801, and was so fascinated by it that he reproduced its melody as best he could in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805. In his Introduction to the edition of 1830 he says: "Mr. Stoddart was able to repeat to me, among others, the striking fragment called *Christabel*, by Mr. Coleridge, which, from the singularly irregular structure of the stanzas and the liberty which it allowed the author, to adapt the sound to the sense, seemed exactly suited to such an extravaganza as I meditated . . . and it is to Mr. Coleridge that I am bound to make the acknowledgment due from the pupil to his master."

When the *Lay* was published Southey wrote: "The beginning of the story is too like Coleridge's *Christabel*, which he (Scott) had seen; the very line 'Jesu Maria, shield her well,' is caught from it."

It was through the influence of Byron that Murray published the poem in 1816.

Part II., ll. 77-95. Alas! etc.

Lamb told the Gillmans: "I was very angry with Coleridge

when first I heard that he had written a second canto, and that he intended to finish it ; but when I read the beautiful apostroph of the two friends it calmed me."

1798-1825.

ENCINCTURED WITH A TWINE OF LEAVES.

(From *The Wanderings of Cain*.)

These verses first published in a note to the " Conclusion " of *Aids to Reflection*, 1825.

The quaint prose poem *The Wanderings of Cain* has a history not unlike that of *The Ancient Mariner*, in that it was intended to be a joint production of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and also in that it is a study of the great forces of retributive justice. It was to be in three cantos : Wordsworth was to write the first, and Coleridge the second, while the third was to be the work of that one who completed his canto first. The result shows how ludicrous the plan was ; Coleridge's muse could fly to such heights while that of Wordsworth was preparing to walk. He says (1828) : " Methinks I see his (Wordsworth's) grand and noble countenance as at the moment when having despatched my own portion of the task at full finger-speed, I hastened to him with my manuscript, — that look of humorous despondency fixed on his almost blank sheet of paper, and then its silent mock-piteous admission of failure struggling with the sense of the exceeding ridiculousness of the whole scheme — which broke up in a laugh."

Later Coleridge undertook to compose the whole anew in verse, and made, as he says, " some progress when adverse gales drove my bark off the ' Fortunate Isles ' of the muses. And then other and more momentous interests prompted a different voyage, to firmer anchorage and a securer port. I have in vain tried to recover the lines from the palimpsest tablet of my memory ; and I can only offer the introductory stanza which had been committed to writing for the purpose of procuring a friend's judgment on the metre as a specimen."

Thus we have another exquisite " fragment," in which is the rare essence of pure poetry.

At his best Coleridge had that supreme gift which M. Edmond

Scherer calls "the pinion-stroke which sweeps Ganymede into the Emyrean and casts him panting at Jupiter's feet."

Mr. A. C. Swinburne says: "It is natural that there should be nothing like these poems discoverable in any human work; natural that his poetry at its highest should be, as it is, beyond all praise and all words of men. He who could define it could unweave a rainbow."

1798-1798.

FRANCE : AN ODE.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, April 16, 1798.

While the two poets were murmuring near the running brooks a music sweeter than their own, somewhat of a sensation was caused in the quiet community of Stowey by the advent there of a young Republican by the name of Thelwall, with whom Coleridge had some correspondence. When he arrived Coleridge was with the Wordsworths; and he writes to his wife: "So after sleeping at Coleridge's cot, Sara and I went to Alfoxden in time enough to call Samuel and Wordsworth up to breakfast."

Coleridge says of Thelwall (*Table Talk*, July, 1830): "We were once sitting in a beautiful recess in the Quantocks, when I said to him, 'Citizen John, this is a fine place to talk treason in!' 'Nay, Citizen Samuel,' he replied, 'it is rather a place to make a man forget that there is any necessity for treason.'"

Coleridge's lectures and preaching and Wordsworth's secluded life with his sister had, even before the arrival of 'Citizen' Thelwall, aroused suspicions of the good people. They thought Wordsworth a smuggler, a conjurer, and as he was "so silent and dark," a French Jacobin. Poole was blamed for harboring such suspects (it was through Poole that Wordsworth secured Alfoxden), and now a government spy was sent down to watch their movements. The *Anti-Jacobin* published the following:—

"Thelwall and ye that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted,
Praise Lepaux!¹

And ye five other wandering bards that move
In sweet accord of harmony and love,

¹ A French charlatan.

C—dge, and S—th—y, L—d and L—b, and Co.,
Tune all your mystic harps to praise
Lepaux."

Coleridge, writing to Cottle of the experience of Wordsworth, says: "Whether we shall be able to procure him a house and furniture near Stowey we know not, and yet we must; for the hills, and the woods, and the streams, and the sea, and the shores, would break forth into reproaches against us, if we did not strain every nerve to keep their poet among them."

The first product of the new year (1798) was this magnificent ode which he called *Recantation*, revealing the fact that Coleridge had now clearly seen the horrid delusion, the vile mockery of the whole affair. Here are no entrancing notes of liquid melody, but the strong, deep, tumultuous tones of the organ, — a wail of despair at the perfidy of those who, after singing pæans to Freedom, could enslave a sister Republic. Cf. Wordsworth's sonnet, "I grieved for Buonaparte" (1802), and "Another year, another deadly blow," &c. (1806), and Shelley's *Ode to Liberty*. Cf. S. A. Brooke's edition of Wordsworth's *Poems of Independence and Liberty*.

While Coleridge was in Germany, 1798-99, he found satisfaction in the fact that the aged Klopstock had written odes on the French Revolution, and had received presents from France, but when success turned to tyranny he wrote palinodia and returned the presents. Cf. *Prelude* XI. 320-369, for a revelation of Wordsworth's feelings at being disillusioned.

In Coleridge's early odes he had been under the influence of Gray, but here he is on the heights to which he has climbed by his own efforts, and is as supreme now in this type of poetry as in that which we have just passed. He has perfect command of the keys of the most complex musical instrument, and the result is the complete union of thought and feeling in sphere-born harmonies, verse and voice.

"He now spoke with contempt of Gray," says Hazlitt, "and intolerance of Pope. He observed that the 'ears of these couplet-writers might be charged with having short memories, that could not retain the harmony of whole passages.'"

ll. 53, 54. These lines were the occasion of a very unwarranted

charge of plagiarism preferred by De Quincey. He claimed that Coleridge took them from *Samson Agonistes*, 136-139,

"When insupportably his foot advanced," &c.,

but that he refused to acknowledge the obligation. Cf. De Quincey, *The Lake Poets*, p. 44.

Henry Nelson Coleridge answered this charge of what De Quincey called 'Coleridge's infirmity' in the Preface to *Table Talk*.

1798-1798.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

First printed in a pamphlet with *France : An Ode*, in 1798.

With the disappointment revealed in the *Ode to France* came a distinct weakening in Coleridge's interest in the larger social and political life of his time. In place of these human interests came the quieter aspects of nature and his own soul. The picture which we have in this poem reveals the pensive and paternal tenderness of that great soul whose food was Human Love. It is full of what Professor Dowden calls 'his affluent and sweet humanity.' Mrs. Sandford says his pensive Sara "betrayed to sympathizing friends how trying it was when Samuel *would* walk up and down composing poetry instead of coming to bed at proper hours. I have sometimes thought Ophelia might have been like Mrs. Coleridge if she and Hamlet had lived to be married. In her girlish grace and softness she belonged to the very type of woman that a Hamlet in early youth most easily falls in love with, for she personifies womanhood to him."

Coleridge once said : "Every one wishes a Desdemona or Ophelia for a wife — creatures who, though they may not always understand you, do always feel you, and feel with you."

ll. 44 *et seq.* These lines were prophetic, as at this time he had no prospect of ever living in the Lake country. The version of 1798 had the following six lines in conclusion :

"Like thee, my babe ! which ere to-morrow's warmth
Have capp'd their sharp, keen points with pendulous drops,
Will catch thine eye, and with their novelty
Suspend thy little soul ; then make thee shout,
And stretch and flutter from thy mother's arms,
As thou would'st fly for very eagerness."

The story of Hartley's joyous life in the peaceful and solemn grandeur of rivers, lakes, and hills, should be read in Canon Rawnsley's *Literary Associations of the English Lakes*. Cf. Hartley Coleridge, *Essays and Poems*.

1798-1798.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE.

First printed in pamphlet with *France: An Ode*, and *Frost at Midnight*, 1798.

Written in April, 1798, during the Alarm of the Invasion. — The scene the hill near Stowey. — S. T. C.

There is no poem of Coleridge which so clearly reveals the influence of Wordsworth's splendid patriotic principles based on love of Nature and Man in England as does this. The severest criticisms on the policy of their country at times was entirely consistent with this noble patriotism. "Such patriotism," said Professor Dowden, "can only be uprooted together with the very foundations of our moral being."

Something of the natural atmosphere of this poem is found in Dorothy's *Journal*:

"Went to the hill-top. Sat a considerable time overlooking the country toward the Sea. The air blew pleasantly round us. The Welsh hills capped by a huge range of tumultuous white clouds. The sea spotted with white, of a bluish grey in general, and streaked with darker lines. The near shores clear; scattered farm houses, half concealed by green, mossy orchards, fresh straw lying at the doors; haystacks in the fields. Brown fallows, the springing wheat, like a shade of green over the brown earth; and the choice meadow plots, full of sheep and lambs, of a soft and vivid green; a few wreaths of blue smoke spreading along the ground; the oaks and beeches in the hedges retaining their green leaves; the distant prospect on the land side, islanded with sunshine; the sea, like a basin full to the margin."

There is something distinctly Wordsworthian in the contrast between the poet's agitated feelings and the calm of the heathy dell.

ll. 222-229. An allusion to the home of his friend Poole, and his own Stowey cottage. Coleridge's poems are as good a guide to this district as are Wordsworth's to that of the Lakes.

1798-1798.

THE NIGHTINGALE : A CONVERSATION POEM.

First printed in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798.

Young Hazlitt, who came to know Coleridge the preacher at this time, has given us a characteristic sketch in *My First Acquaintance with the Poets*. Coleridge went to preach at Shrewsbury, ten miles from even Hazlitt's home. Hazlitt walked the ten miles through mud to hear this celebrated person preach. He says : " When I got there the organ was playing the 100th Psalm, and when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text, ' And He went up into the mountain, to pray. *Himself alone.*' As he gave out this text his voice ' rose like a stream of rich distilled perfumes,' and when he came to the last two words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe."

Coleridge visited Hazlitt on the Tuesday following. It was while there that he received the offer from Josiah Wedgewood of £150 a year if he would abandon preaching and give himself up to the study of poetry and philosophy. Hazlitt says : " He was henceforth to inhabit the Hill of Parnassus, to be a shepherd on the Delectable Mountain. Alas ! I knew not the way thither." In accepting this splendid gift Coleridge wrote of his success as a preacher at Shrewsbury, and added, " but one shrewd fellow remarked that he would rather hear me *talk* than *preach*." Coleridge once asked Lamb if he had ever heard him preach, and Lamb replied, " I've never heard you do anything else."

In this last poem of the Stowey period, so radiant with the love and hope of the three friends, there is an exquisitely tender pathos. The *Lyrical Ballads* were rapidly taking shape. Wordsworth, Dorothy and Coleridge had decided to visit Germany to study the language, and the thought of breaking up the Elysian repose among the Quantocks throws the poet into one of his pensive moods, in which the affections gently lead him on. Here he returns, " to his love and his nest," and finds joy in the

thoughts that spring from the simple domestic affections, from the delightful associations with man and nature in the sylvan retreats of the land he loved.

Wordsworth thus alludes to this period. *Prelude*, Book i.

"That summer, under whose indulgent skies
Upon smooth Quantock's airy ridge we roved
Uncheck'd, or loitered 'mid her sylvan combs,
Thou in bewitching words, with happy heart,
Didst chaunt the vision of that Ancient Man,
The bright-eyed Mariner, and rueful woes
Didst utter of the Lady Christabel;
And I, associate with such labor, steeped
In soft forgetfulness the livelong hours,
Murmuring of him who, joyous hap, was found,
After the perils of his moonlight ride,
Near the loud waterfall; or her who sate
In misery near the miserable Thorn."

l. 13. Cf. *Il Penseroso*, l. 61. In vindication of the expression in the following lines, Coleridge says that with Milton the speaker is a melancholy man, and the expression has a dramatic propriety. Wordsworth said these lines of Coleridge would rectify the false notions which had prevailed with regard to the nightingale.

l. 40. "My Friend and My Friend's Sister!" was the early form of this line. Of course the allusion is to Wordsworth and Dorothy.

The Wordsworths left Alfoxden in midsummer, and after staying a time with Coleridge, visited the Wye and returned to Bristol, where they were attending to the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads*. In May Coleridge's second son was born and named 'Berkeley,' in honor of the philosopher. Lamb had been estranged by some injudicious remarks of Lloyd, and on hearing a remark of Coleridge relating to the estrangement, "Poor Lamb, if he wants *any knowledge*, he may apply to me," in irony and anger sent him, "*Theses quædam Theologicæ* to be defended or oppugned (or both), as Lamb said at Leipsic or Gottingen." Among them were: "Whether God or lying angel better than a true man? Whether the higher order of Seraphim illuminati ever sneer?"

The *Lyrical Ballads* were published by Cottle in September

anonymously. The first six poems were by Coleridge, the remainder by Wordsworth. The following is an exact reprint of the table of contents :

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1799 ?-?

WESTPHALIAN SONG.

Before the reviewers had brought their guns to bear upon the frail craft of the *Lyrical Ballads*, the two poets and Dorothy, having left Mrs. Coleridge and the children with Poole, departed for Germany, where they soon received the cheerful news from Sara

that "the *Lyrical Ballads* are not liked at all by any." And yet through the quiet revolution in poetic taste which this little volume wrought, the Bastile of the old poetic tyranny was destined to fall to the ground.

"So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797 and 1798," says Edmund Gosse, "that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close of the latter year, we should, indeed, have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especially of Wordsworth's; but the direction taken by literature would scarcely have been modified in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflammatory minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced full-blown and perfect the exquisite new flower of romantic poetry."

At Hamburg they met the aged Klopstock. Coleridge, in one of his letters, writes of his discussions on poetry with the author, of *Messiah*, and alluding to the fact that a German preacher had called Klopstock a German Milton, says: "I could not help muttering to myself—'a very *German* Milton indeed!!!'"

Soon Coleridge left the Wordsworths for Ratzeburg, where he remained during the winter, while they went to the old imperial town of Goslar, where, though cold and homesick, Wordsworth wrote his inimitable poems on English girlhood.

Wordsworth sent these poems to Coleridge, who, while thinking of the future and hoping that their homes would be in the same neighborhood, wrote: "Whenever I spring forward into the future with noble affections, I always alight by your side."

In February Coleridge entered Göttingen, where he studied chiefly German language and literature. As a result, he tried his hand at translating German poetry, and even Old Gothic, of which this song is a good illustration. His studies in metaphysics, too, began to stifle the bard in him, but his reading of Lessing stimulated his critical instinct, especially in the interpretation of Shakespeare.

In order to know something of the life of the peasants in Germany, Coleridge visited the country, frequented the beer-houses, joined in their festivals, danced and sang with them. Mr. Alois Brandl says: "He lived for days upon potatoes and pancakes, and slept at night upon straw in the village inns, which had nothing better." As a result of this life we have some of the popular songs reproduced for us. This one he learned from the lips of a peasant.

1799-1817.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

First printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817.This little poem is an imitation of Schiller's *Ditbyrambe*.

Nimmer, das glaubt mir
 Erscheinen die Götter
 Nimmer allein,
 Kaum dasz ich Bucchus der Lustigen habe,
 Kommt auch schon Amor, der lächelnde Knabe.
 Phöbus, der Herrliche, findel sich ein !
 Sie nahen, sie kommen, —
 Wie Himmlischen alle,
 Mit Göttern erfüllt sich
 Die irdische Halle.

1799-1799.

NAMES.

First printed in *Morning Post*, August 17, 1799.

This is a translation of Lessing's *Die Namen*. It has been set as a four-part song by F. Champneys (Neville, c. 1884.") — J. D. Campbell.

1799 ?-1831.

WATER BALLAD.

First printed in the *Athenæum*, October 9, 1831.

This little poem first appeared in the *Athenæum*, October 9, 1831. There is no information in regard to it. I put it here because there is a possibility that it is a translation from the German.

1799-1799.

LINES WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE IN THE
HARTZ FOREST.First printed in the *Morning Post*, September 17, 1799.

While Coleridge was in Göttingen he was visited by some young Englishmen, and they, with students, made an excursion to the

Hartz Mountains. While at an inn he wrote (May 17) these verses in the album or Stamm-Buch :

————— ‘ When I have gazed
From some high eminence on goodly vales,
And cots and villages embowered below,
The thought would rise that all to me was strange
Amid the scenes so fair, nor one small spot
Where my tired mind might rest and call it home.’

Southey’s *Hymn to the Penates*.

“ Came to Elbingerode from Great Brocken, the highest mountain in all North Germany, and the seat of innumerable superstitions. On the first of May all the witches dance here at midnight.”

Gillman’s *Life of Coleridge*.

1799–1800.

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL.

First printed in *Ann. Antbology*, 1800.

This poem was sent to Mrs. Coleridge in a letter April 23, 1799, from Göttingen. It is a translation of the German popular song, *Wenn ich ein Vöglein wär*, in *Des Knaben Wunderborn*.

1799–1802.

THE DAY DREAM.

First printed in *Morning Post*, October 19, 1802. Next, in *The Poems*, 1852, with the following editorial note :

“ This little poem first appeared in the *Morning Post*, in 1802, but was doubtless composed in Germany. It seems to have been forgotten by its author, for this was the only occasion on which it saw the light through him. The editors think that it will plead against paternal neglect in the mind of most readers.”

Little Berkeley died in February, and on receiving the news Coleridge is prostrated with grief. Writing to Poole he quotes the lines which Wordsworth had sent him from Goslar : “ A slumber did my spirit seal,” and thinks they may have been suggested to Wordsworth by the thought of Dorothy’s death. It is possible that *A Day Dream* may have been in some way related to his feel-

ings at this time, for he wrote of Hartley, "Dear lamb, I hope *he* won't be dead before I get home."

1799-1799.

LOVE.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, December 21, 1799, under the title, "Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladié."

The Wordsworths had returned to England in the spring of 1799, and had gone to live with the Hutchinsons at Sockburn (cf. *Prelude* Book I.); Coleridge left Göttingen in June and arrived at Stowey about the middle of July. Southey and his wife visited them here for two or three weeks. After this Coleridge visited the Wordsworths at Sockburn.

Mr. Ernest Coleridge believes this poem was written at Sockburn during Coleridge's visit.

It may be said that here closes the second period of his work. And it is not a little significant that it coincided with the setting out of the two poets upon new experiences in life and new lines of poetic activity, which in the one case was to be characterized by storm and stress, and in the other by dignity, serenity and peace—

"An eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,"

whence came the vision into the life of things.

This poem, so full of the felicity and beauty of melody, the warm poetic joy in human feeling, set in the rich framework of Nature, might be considered as symbolizing Coleridge's life with poetry during the last three years, as it retains all the glow and passion of poetic youth,

"docile, childlike, full of Life and Love."

There is here just a hint of what must come when his life will be revealed in

"Songs that make us grieve,"

and we can imagine him repeating to himself the sad lines of Shakespeare:

"My grief lies onward, and my joy behind."

ll. 9, 10. "We entered the wood through a beautiful mossy path; the moon above us blending with the evening lights, and every now and then a nightingale would invite the others to sing." — *Letters to his Wife, May 17, 1799, describing his ascent of the Brocken* (Campbell).

1799-1834.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE.

First printed in *Poems*, 1834.

As has been said, the previous poem *Love* was an introduction to this. "In a manuscript list (undated) of his poems drawn up by Coleridge, appear these three together: *Love*, 96 lines (exactly the number printed). *The Black Ladië*, 190 lines. *The Black Ladië* doubtless, was *The Dark Ladië*, so that the asterisks stand for about two thirds of the whole" (Campbell).

1799-1799.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

First printed in *Morning Post*, Dec. 28, 1799.

On the conclusion of the visit to Sockburn, Cottle, Coleridge, and Wordsworth started on a tour of the Lake Country. Cottle left the party at Greta Bridge, and they were joined by Wordsworth's brother John. They were especially delighted with Grasmere, and as Wordsworth was ready to begin housekeeping with his sister, he rented Dove Cottage at Pavement End and took up his abode there in December. Cf. *On Nature's Invitation do I Come*, and *Bleak Season was it, Turbulent and Wild*. Coleridge, having received an offer to write political articles for the *Morning Post*, went immediately to London after returning to Sockburn. Southey was at this time engaged on the second volume of his *Annual Anthology*, and Coleridge got together fourteen poems for it. Among the number was *A Christmas Carol*.

While in Göttingen he had translated a passage in Ottfried's Gospel. Mr. Campbell thinks this little poem was inspired by Ottfried.

1800-1800.

THEKLA'S SONG FROM THE PICCOLOMINI.

Act II., Sc. 4. First printed in 1800.

Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley had joined Coleridge in London in December at 21 Buckingham Street, Strand. He made an engagement to translate Schiller's *Wallenstein*, and in February, 1800, he gave up his position on the *Morning Post*. Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley returned to Stowey, while he went to the Lambs at Pentonville. Lamb writes of this visit: "I am living in a continuous feast. Coleridge has been with me now for nigh three weeks."

While his German studies had produced but little poetry, they stimulated his love of Schiller, and now he shows what he had learned of the language by attempting the difficult task of translation. At the very time Schiller's MSS. were in London and supposed to be in other hands for translation, they came into the possession of the Longmans, and Schiller was surprised to find Coleridge's translation, so he wrote asking where he got the MSS. Many have maintained that Coleridge's *Wallenstein* is superior to Schiller's. Coleridge says: "I found it not in my power to translate this song with *literal* fidelity, preserving at the same time the *Alcaic Movement*."

1800-1802.

THE KEEPSAKE.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, Sept. 17, 1802.

In April he is with the Wordsworths at Dove Cottage for a visit.

It is more than probable that this little poem was written at Grasmere during this visit, as Emmeline was Wordsworth's poetical name for his sister Dorothy, and the natural setting of the poem is most assuredly that of the Grasmere gardens and walks.

l. 10. I believe Wordsworth makes no mention of this flower in his poetry.

1800-1831.

A STRANGER MINSTREL.

First printed in the *Memoirs* of the late Mrs. Robinson, written by herself, with some posthumous poems, 1831.

In June, Coleridge, his wife, and little Hartley came to Dove Cottage on their way to Keswick. Dorothy wrote in the Journal, June 22, 1800 : " On Sunday, Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge and Hartley came. The day was very warm. We sailed to the foot of Loughrigg. They staid with us three weeks, and till the Thursday following, from 1st till 23rd of July." Greta Hall was only part built at this time. It was the property of a very interesting 'yeoman of the old school,' whose character has been celebrated by Wordsworth in the "Waggoner." "William Jackson, Carrier, Whitehaven, to Kendal and Lancaster," was the sign on his waggon. 'Him o' Rydal' has written thus, for he,

"Through all the changes of the year,
Had seen 'it' through the mountains go,
In pomp of mist or pomp of snow,
Majestically huge and slow."

He occupied a part of the House, and was glad to have a philosopher and poet occupy the rest as soon as finished, for, as Coleridge afterward wrote of him, "He was from a boy a lover of learning."

Mr. Richard Garnett thinks that while Coleridge's decision to live in the Lakes was made in order to be near Wordsworth, yet it was "supplemented, perhaps, by another, his admiration for Dorothy Wordsworth, who would in all probability have become his wife, but for the unfortunate precipitation, under strong pressure from well-meaning and much-mistaken Southey, which had already made him the husband of an excellent woman entirely unsuited to him."

He was sorry to leave his friend Poole, but, as Mrs. Sandford says : "Coleridge would never been contented to live in the west of England whilst Wordsworth was living in the north." His delight with his new environment was unbounded.

He writes : "Here I am with Skiddaw at my back ; on my right hand the Bassenthwait Water, with its majestic case of mountains — all of simplest outline. . . . My God ! What a scene ! Right before me is a great *Camp* of mountains, each in shape resembling a Giant's tent. . . . Hartley is all health and ecstasy. . . . My wife will not let me stay — I must go and unpack a trunk for her." In September his third son was born,

and he named him Derwent, for the lake near. Dorothy's Grasmere Journal is full of revelations of these days. She says: "At 11 Coleridge came when I was walking in the still clear moonshine in the garden. He came over Helvellyn. We sate and chatted till half past three . . . Coleridge reading a part of *Christabel*." Sept. 1. "After dinner Coleridge discovered a rock seat in the orchard." Oct. 4. "Coleridge came in while we were at dinner, very wet. We talked till twelve o'clock. He had sat all the night before writing essays for the newspaper." Oct. 11. "Wm composed without much success at the Sheepfold (Michael). Coleridge came in to dinner. . . . Wm read *Ruth*, etc., after supper. Coleridge read *Christabel* (Part II.)."

The subject of this poem, *The Stranger Minstrel*, was a Mrs. Robinson, whom Coleridge had met in London. She was a friend of the Godwins, had been unhappily married, and, assisted by Garrick, had gone upon the stage. She became known as 'Perdita,' because of a successful interpretation of that character. She wrote for the *Morning Post*. Coleridge naturally sympathized with her struggle, and she returned the feeling with admiration. They had an active correspondence in verse. She alluded to Coleridge thus:

"Thee, O favored child of minstrelsy, sublimely wild,"

and again, alluding to *Kubla Khan*:

"Spirit divine! with thee will I wander.
I'll mark thy sunny dome, and view
Thy caves of ice, thy fields of dew."

This led her to visit the Lakes, with which she at once became fascinated. Soon after leaving in November, 1800, she wrote Coleridge on her deathbed, revealing her homesickness for a glimpse of Skiddaw. Mr. Campbell thinks this poem was a response to the letter. She died a few weeks later. When her poems were published Coleridge wrote another plaint describing what he felt at her loss. Cf. *The Mad Monk*.

Lines 9-14 show a marked resemblance to Wordsworth's *Ode On Intimations of Immortality*, 1-7.

1800?—1893.

THE SNOW DROP.

First printed in J. D. Campbell's edition of the poet's works, 1893.

Mr. Campbell gives the following note to this fragment, which he found in MS. :—

"In quality it is very unequal, but there are some lines which no one but Coleridge could have written. The draft title and the letter explain the motive and intention of the verses. There are five stanzas more, but they are too imperfect for print.

'Lines written immediately after the Perusal of Mrs. Robinson's Snow Drop.

To the Editor of the Morning Post :

SIR, — I am one of your many readers who have been highly gratified by some extracts from Mrs. Robinson's 'Walsingham' : You will oblige me by inserting the following lines (composed) immediately on the perusal of her beautiful poem, The Snow Drop.' "

Coleridge was only twelve miles from the Wordsworths, and it was an easy matter for them to meet at the halfway trysting ground on Lake Thirlmere.

There is a very significant memorial of these happy days spent with the Wordsworths by the side of the coach road at Thirlmere. On *The Rock of Names*, which was preserved by Dr. Rawnsley (the guardian of all things sacred on the Lakes), when demolition threatened it at the hands of the workmen as Thirlmere was being transformed into a reservoir for the city of Manchester, was engraved the initials, W. W., S. T. C., D. W., J. W., M. H., and S. H. Wordsworth says :

"We worked until the initials took
Shapes that defied a scornful look,
For they were graven on thy smooth breast
By hands of those my soul loved best."

Of one of these excursions Dorothy writes under date of May 14, 1802, "We rested several times by the way, read, and repeated *The Leechgatherer*. . . . We saw Coleridge on the Wytheburn side of the water ; he crossed the beck to us. . . . We rested

upon a moss-covered rock rising out of the bed of the river. There we lay, ate our dinner, and stayed there until about four o'clock or later. William and Coleridge repeated and read verses. We parted from Coleridge at Sara's Crag. . . . William deepened the X (middle strokes) with C.'s penknife. . . . C. looked well and parted from us cheerfully, hopping upon the sides of the stone."

It was near here toward Wytheburn that Gray, on that eventful morning of his visit to the Lakes on October 8, 1769, coming from Keswick, saw Grasmere. "One of the greatest landscapes that art ever attempted to imitate. . . . Not a single red tile, no flaming gentleman's house, or garden walls break in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise, but all is peace, rusticity and happy poverty in its neatest, most becoming attire." — *Journal on the Lakes*.

Here at Nag's Head Inn Keats slept (June, 1818), after having been disappointed at not finding Wordsworth at home. He writes his brother Tom, saying: — "I wrote a note and left it on his mantelpiece, thence on we came to the foot of Helvellyn, where we slept, but could not ascend for the mist." From the old inn in 1830 set out a merry party for a tramp over the hills to the "wide glimmering sea." Matthew Arnold, his sister "Fausta," his brother Tom, his father Dr. Arnold, and Captain Hamilton, the history of which is given in Arnold's *Resignation*.

"High on the bank our leader stands,
Reviews and ranks his motley bands,
Makes clear our goal to every eye, —
The valley's western boundary.

And now, in front, behold outspread
Those upper regions we must tread!
Mild hollows, and clear heathy swells,
The cheerful silence of the fells."

On this spot stands a simple memorial of the event erected by Dr. Rawnsley.

1801-1801.

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, Dec. 4, 1801.

This year is full of trouble for Coleridge. He has many plans for work, but little comes of them. Now it is *The Rise and Condition of the German Boors*, the study of *Chemistry*, a work *Concerning Poetry*, completion of *Christabel*, &c. Clearly enough, there is not much income in this speculating. He becomes ill, laudanum, which he calls the 'Kendal Black Drop,' is prescribed, and terrible results follow. Cf. Wordsworth, *Stanzas written in my Pocket Copy of Thomson's Canto of Indolence*. He wants to go to the Azores for his health, and Wordsworth intercedes for him with Poole. Yet at this very time he writes: "My Spirits are good, I am generally cheerful; and when I am not it is because I have exchanged it for a deeper and more pleasurable tranquillity," and Mr. Campbell adds:—"a periphrasis, one fears, for opium dreams." Under such conditions we may imagine this poem to have been written.

It must now be evident that the poetic impulse which carried him to such heights in 1797-98 has well nigh spent itself. Gleams of the great ideals like the flashing of a shield come, but only for a moment, and they serve but to illumine the surrounding darkness.

This poem breathes the spirit which came upon him while in the happy seclusion and calm repose of Dove Cottage, a spirit which induced him to give up the tumult of political agitation.

Mr. Campbell says that in the first version of this ode there were two introductory stanzas which were never reprinted by Coleridge.

1802-1802.

DEJECTION : AN ODE.

First printed in *Morning Post* Oct. 4, 1802, in *Poems*, 1817.

There are three versions of this poem: the first in Coleorton Papers of Coleridge, the second, that of *Morning Post*, and the third, that of *Poems*, 1817, given here.

New sorrows came to Coleridge which moved him still farther from the harbor of tranquillity. Domestic estrangement, which all who knew the conditions of his marriage foresaw with trembling, now became chronic, filling his cup of woe to the brim. All the more bitter it was because of the new life of love which was

now permeating Dove Cottage, where all activity was centred around the approaching marriage of Wordsworth to Mary Hutchinson. In Prelude VI., after alluding to Dorothy, Wordsworth says : —

“ Another maid there was, who also shed
A gladness o’er that season, then to me,
By her exulting outside look of youth
And placid under-countenance, first endeared ;
That other spirit, Coleridge ! who is now
So near to us, that meek confiding heart,
So revered by us both.”

The three stages of Wordsworth’s relation to her should be read in the beautiful poem, *She was a Phantom of Delight*.

For this greatest blight in the life of two souls we are not required to fix responsibility. More than enough has been written of Coleridge’s faults as a husband, and of Mrs. Coleridge’s fretfulness and disposition to worry him with swarms of petty cares ; but certain it is that the sustenance of love had been removed, and there was not even sympathy in mind and taste to prevent the union becoming one of chains and fetters. Thomas Poole once wrote apropos of the impracticability of genius : “ Is genius a misfortune ? No. But people of genius ought imperiously to command themselves to think *without* genius of the common concerns of life.” Coleridge went to London in the fall of 1801, wrote for the *Morning Post*, read metaphysics, and with Poole attended Sir Humphry Davy’s lectures at the Royal Institution. In February or March he returned to Greta Hall and almost immediately sought the sympathy of the Wordsworths. Dorothy writes in her Journal of March 18, 19, Thursday and Friday, “ Gave up expecting William ; a very rainy morning. I went up into the lane to collect a few green mosses to make the chimney gay against my darling’s return. Poor C., I did not wish for, or expect him, it rained so. . . . Coleridge came in. His eyes were a little swollen with the wind. I was much affected by the sight of him, he seemed half stupefied. William came in soon after. Coleridge went to bed late, and William and I sate up till four o’clock.” If we could have heard the conversation on that and other evenings of this time about Coleridge we might be able to judge more fairly

of these terrible disturbances, — but there is no word of judgment upon either of the parties involved.

On the fourth of April Coleridge writes this, the saddest of all his poems, a threnody in wild and mournful music.

“The first draft of this poem is addressed directly to Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge to William Wordsworth.” Some changes were made in the *Morning Post* edition, and still greater in that of 1817, when it appeared in Coleridge’s Works. This was due to an unfortunate estrangement which grew up between the poets.

l. 25. *Morning Post* edition has, “O, Edmund!” etc., and first draft, O, William.

l. 47. *M. P.* edition has, “O, Edmund!” and first draft, “O, William!” etc.

l. 75. Between this and 76, *M. P.* edition has :

“Yes, dearest Edmund, yes!”

l. 120. *M. P.* edition has, “As Edmund’s self,” etc., and first draft, “William’s self,” etc.

l. 138. *M. P.* edition has, “Dear Lady,” etc., and first draft, “dear William,” and between this and the following line the *M. P.* edition has : —

“O rais’d from anxious dread and busy care,
By the immenseness of the good and fair
Which thou see’st everywhere,
Joy lifts thy spirit, joy attunes thy voice,
To thee do all things live from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of thy living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
O lofty Poet, full of life and love,
Brother and friend of my devoutest choice,
Thus may’st thou ever, evermore rejoice!”

ESTHZE.

ll. 117–125. An allusion to Wordsworth’s *Lucy Gray*. This was more evident when “William” stood in the place of “Otway.”

As the Wordsworths were at Greta Hall on April 4, it is more than likely that Coleridge read the poem to them.

In this dirge at the death of his poetic powers he is prostrate

in helpless and hopeless despair. Yet he sings of the glory of his brother poet, and of the purity of human love which he had disclosed to him in the past. Mr. Stopford Brooke says: "Every description of Nature in the *Ode to Dejection* is penetrated with the mystic temper of his inner life, and the natural things he speaks of have become part of the landscape of his heart."

There is not a little significance in the fact that this poem was first published in the *Morning Post*, October 4, 1802, the wedding day of William Wordsworth and Mary Hutchinson.

In his Latin letter to Coleridge of October 9, 1802 (Ainger's *Letters*, i. 185), Lamb makes allusion to the appearance of the *Ode* in a passage thus translated by Canon Ainger: "I am wonderfully pleased to have your account of the marriage of Wordsworth (or perhaps I should say of a certain *Edmund* of yours). All blessings rest on thee, Mary! [Mrs. Wordsworth] too happy in thy lot. . . . I wish thee also joy in this new alliance, Dorothy, truly so named, that other *gift of God*."—Campbell.

On Wednesday, April 21, Dorothy writes: "William and I sauntered a little in the garden. Coleridge came to us, and repeated the verses he wrote to Sara. I was affected by them and in miserable spirits."

These verses may have been an earlier draft of this *Ode*; if so, he had very quickly substituted Sara (Hutchinson), the sister of Mrs. Wordsworth, for William, of the first draft, as he had Edmund in that and the *Morning Post*. In contrast to this poem we should read Wordsworth's *A Farewell*, written at this time.

The Rev. Canon Ainger thinks that the following lines in Wordsworth's *Leechgatherer*, 1802, refer to Coleridge of those days:—

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood;
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good;
But how can He expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all?

From Coleridge's *Ode* in turn did Wordsworth receive inspiration, as is seen in *Intimations of Immortality*.

The conception of Nature in the poem which gives it its chief charm is that which had been learned from Wordsworth. Here is no inventory of Nature's beauties, but a subtle penetration into the secret of her power over those who, by obedience, understand her mysteries. Cf. *To Nature*, p. 266.

The marked difference between the mind and art of Wordsworth and Coleridge has been fully recognized, but the fact that no two English poets of equal power were so much alike, especially in their blank verse, has had too little notice. Here it is that they use the same weapons, in conception and execution, against the mechanical devices of versification which were so prevalent. A study of this phase of their work, where their "sincere large accent nobly plain" and their power as painters are so distinctly revealed, will be greatly rewarding to the student.

1802-1802.

THE PICTURE, OR, THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, Sept. 6, 1802.

In August cheer came to Coleridge by a visit of Charles and Mary Lamb. "He received us," says Lamb, "with all hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show us all the wonders of his country. . . . Here we stayed three full weeks." This poem was written during Lamb's visit, and it is at such times when, stimulated by the warmth of human associations, his emotion rouses imagination into something of its wonted shaping power.

If one reads Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal for this year one will find how pained she and her brother were at the trouble in which Coleridge was. "Bad news of Coleridge," "We had a melancholy letter from Coleridge," are the frequent entries.

It should be remembered that Lamb was a "scorner of the fields" until he visited the Lakes. To the first invitation hither he replied: "Sweets, sweets, sweets, markets, theatres, churches, Covent Gardens, shops sparkling with pretty faces of industrious milliners. . . . Gentlemen behind counters lying, authors in the street with spectacles, . . . old book stalls, these are thy pleasures O London! with—the—many—sins. O city, for these may Keswick and her giant brood go hang." Yet this slave to the

"dry drudgery of the desk's dead wood" was "a scorner of the fields more in show than truth," for the mountains, lakes and sounding cataracts wrought their spell upon him here, and after his return to his work he writes of his arrival: "We thought we had got into fairyland. . . . Skiddaw, Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a parapet of mountains all about, making you giddy. . . . It was a day that will stand out like a mountain, I am sure, in my life. I feel very *little*. . . . I had been dreaming I was great."

He writes later: "I was pleased to recognize your blank-verse poem (the Picture) in the *Morning Post* of Monday. It reads well, and I feel some dignity in the notion of being able to understand it better than most southern readers."

When the poem appeared in the *Sib. Leaves*, 1817, it was altered and enlarged. Lines 17-26, and 34-42 had been added. Mr. Campbell says: "The poem was kept under the file up to 1829.

1. 4. *Whorts* — Whortleberries.

ll. 17-25. In 1814, when Coleridge was very despondent, he wrote to Cottle in regard to feelings he had about death, saying that he had to fight against preferring "annihilation to the possibility of heaven," and alludes to his "constitutional idiosyncrasy" when a mere boy, as revealed in ll. 1-4 of the *Monody on the Death of Chatterton* (Second Version); and also quotes these lines with frequent alterations:

"Here Wisdom might abide and here Remorse!

Here too the wee worn (written over *heart-sick* erased) man who
weak in soul

And of this busy human Heart a-weary,

Worships the spirit of unconscious Life.

In Tree or Wild-flower. Gentle Lunatic!

If so he might not wholly come to Be,

He would far rather not be that he is;

But would be something that he knows not of,

In Woods or Waters, or among the Rocks."

Cf. Wordsworth, *Lines Left on a Seat in a Yew Tree* and *Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower*.

1802-1802.

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, Sept. 11, 1802.

This poem reveals Coleridge's indisposition to seek out new subjects for poetry either in Nature about him or in his own deep experience. He had never been at Chamouni, but he expanded a German poem by Frederica Brun addressed to Klopstock. The sights and sounds with which this solemn and beautiful psalm begins gradually become so intimately associated with the thoughts which they awaken, that his soul is swept onward and upward until it creates the spiritual vision of it all as an emanation from God. This is Coleridge's revelation to us of the union of God and man through Nature. It is perhaps worthy of note that another poem by the same author, *Sieben Hügel*, is thought to have suggested to Wordsworth the idea for "We Are Seven."

Here is the first stanza of her poem to Klopstock :

" Aus tiefen Schatten des schweigenden Tannenhains
Erblick' ich hebend dich, Scheitel der Ewigkeit,
Blenden der Gipfel, von dessen Höhe
Ahndend mein Geist ins Unendliche Schwebel ! "

When this poem first appeared Coleridge wrote an introductory note in which he discussed the various elements of the scenery in the Savoy Alps in such a way as to give the reader an impression that he wrote the poem from sights and sounds which had been actually his. So when De Quincey, in 1834, revealed the fact that Coleridge had not only not been at Chamouni, but that he was indebted to the German poetess for the suggestion of the poem and also for many of the ideas, words, and images, it created some discussion. It seemed strange that Coleridge never acknowledges to any one this indebtedness. The defence of this act which Henry Nelson Coleridge gives in the Preface to *Table Talk* is in principle sound, and yet it hardly meets this particular case.

Coleridge once said that a visit to the battlefield of Marathon would raise in him no emotions which he did not already possess, and Wordsworth, discussing this, said : " It might in some

sense be true, for Coleridge was not under the influence of external objects. He had extraordinary powers of summing up an image or series of images in his own mind, and he might mean that his idea of Marathon was so vivid that no visible observation could make it more so. A remarkable instance of this is his poem said to be 'composed in the Vale of Chamouni.' Now, he never was at Chamouni, or near it, in his life." Prose Works, III., p. 442.

Mr. Campbell says that there are four versions of the Poem which are associated with *The Friend*. I. That in the Forster Collection at South Kensington. II. *The Friend*, No. XI., first issue. III. *The Friend*, second issue. IV. *The Friend*, first issue as corrected by the Errata and Corrigenda printed in No. XIII.

1802-1802.

AN ODE TO THE RAIN.

Probably first printed in the *Morning Post* about October, 1802. (J. D. Campbell.)

Coleridge's life was not all dejection by any means, even if it was getting somewhat commonplace, for he still had power to emit a note of cheerfulness under such adverse circumstances, as we found him in this poem.

In October Coleridge wrote to J. Wedgewood: "The poetry I have sent [to the *M. P.*] is merely the emptying of my desk." ll. 21, 22. Cf. *Youth and Age*, 1-4.

When we compare the poetical work of Coleridge and Wordsworth we find that genius is not exempt from Burke's principle of development: "Taste is improved," Burke says, "exactly as we improve our judgment, by extending our knowledge, by a steady attention to our object, and by frequent exercise."

1802-1802.

INSCRIPTION FOR A FOUNTAIN.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, September 24, 1802.

In the fall of this year Coleridge visited Wales with the Wedgewoods; when he returned to Dove Cottage on his way home he was informed that on the previous morning a daughter had been born to him.

In Sara Coleridge's *Recollections* I find the following: "My father entered his marriage with my mother, and the births of my three brothers in a family Bible given him by Joseph Cottle on his marriage; the entry of my birth is in my dear mother's handwriting, and this seems like an omen of our life-long separation, for I never lived with him for more than a few weeks at a time."

This poem reveals the fact that there were moments in Coleridge's life at this time when he got relief in the simplest poetic exercise in enjoyment of Nature. This feeling for the beauty of the world about him never forsook him, it is the golden thread which binds all his distinctively great work together. It constituted for him a Fairyland in which he was laid asleep in body and became a living soul. Wordsworth describes this power of Coleridge in the *Prelude* V., 600.

In the annotated copy of P. W., 1828, Coleridge wrote:

"This fountain is an exact emblem of what Mrs. Gillman was by nature . . . it was a crystal fount of water undefiled."

1802-1802.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

First printed in the *Morning Post*, October 16, 1802.

It is fitting that the last of the poems of this year should be in celebration of childlike simplicity and wonder. David Hartley, precocious in thought and imagination, lived in weird dreams, having given himself various names indicating his manifold being, "Real Hartley, Shadow Hartley, Picture Hartley, Looking Glass Hartley, and Catch-me-fast Hartley." One day when his father was surprised at his lack of pleasure as he was being wheeled in a wheelbarrow, he replied: "The pity is that I've always thinking of my thoughts." Again he said, "I'm a boy of very religious turn." Every night he made an extempore prayer aloud, saying to his old nurse, "Now listen!" He was fond of the Bible and Prayer Book. Once when ill of stomach ache, he said: "Oh, Mrs. Wilson, I've got *colic*! read me the Epistle and Gospel for the day." Here is Wordsworth's picture of the wonderful boy, — which Mr. Walter Bagehot calls "the best ever written on a real and visible child."

TO H. C., SIX YEARS OLD.

O Thou ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
And fittest to unutterable thought
The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
In such clear water, that thy boat
May rather seem
To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
Where earth and heaven do make one imagery ;
O blessed vision ! happy child !
Thou art so exquisitely wild,
I think of thee with many fears
For what may be thy lot in future years.
O vain and causeless melancholy !
Nature will either end thee quite ;
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee, by individual right,
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.

According to Mr. Bagehot, Hartley was of the class who "are children through life ; who act on wayward impulse, and whose will has never come ; who toil not and who spin not ; who always have fair Eden's simpleness." It was "but natural, therefore, that he should be known in the Lakes where he lived a quarter of a century — as the children's laureate."

And here is Derwent, "Stumpy canary," as he was called, because he wore a yellow coat. When his father asked him, "Who made you ?" he replied, "James Lawson, the carpenter, father" ; and to the question, "And what did he make you of ?" he answered, "The stuff he makes wood of, he sawed me off and I did not like it." Last of all is the dark-eyed Sara, cooing questions in her cradle.

Amid so many records of distress and hopelessness, it is refreshing to come upon these wholesome and buoyant notes of poetic childhood, where there is no attempt to establish truth, but to give pleasure.

The first title of the poem was *The Language of Birds: Lines Spoken Extempore to a Little Child in Early Spring*.

Mr. Campbell says that it has been twice set to music: *The Song of the Birds*, by J. M. Capes, 1863; and as *I Love and I Love*, by S. Marshall, 1861.

1803-1817.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

First printed in 1817 in a pamphlet with *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*.

In 1803 Coleridge, in his uneasiness of mind and body, visited the Wedgewoods, Southey at Bristol, and Poole at Stowey, in the scenes which had been so dear to him. He met Scott, who had just published *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and Sir Humphry Davy in London, but he got little relief. Returning to Keswick he planned a great work, "Organum vere Organum," which should supersede Bacon's "Novum Organum." It was to be in eight volumes, but he got only as far as a few letters to his friends giving prospectus. Lamb had superintended the reprint, the third edition, of his poems. In August Wordsworth and his sister set out upon their memorable journey to Scotland, and Coleridge was induced to accompany them. His courage was good at the start, and he held out until they reached Inversnaid, or more exactly Arrochar, when, tired of the walking and the jolting of the jaunting car, he parted with them and started homeward.

A frequent entry in Dorothy's *Journal* (which every student should read) is: — "Coleridge was weary, but William and I walked out after tea," "Coleridge was not well," "Coleridge was afraid of the cold." And after the parting, "Our thoughts were full of Coleridge." Mr. J. D. Campbell says: "I suppose Coleridge had found the close companionship incompatible with that free indulgence in narcotics which had become to him a necessity." In *Memorials of Coleorton* there is a letter from Coleridge to Sir George Beaumont in September, 1803, in which he says: "I walked 263 miles in eight days in the hope of forcing the disease (gout) into the extremities. . . . During the whole of my journey, three nights out of four I have fallen asleep struggling, and

resolving to lie awake, and awaking have blessed the Scirans which delivered me from reluctant sleep. These dreams, with all their mockery of guilt, rage, unworthy desires, remorse, shame, and terror, formed at that time the subject of some Verses." Such is the history of *The Pains of Sleep*, which should be compared with the *Kubla Khan* as showing quite a different result of dreams.

De Quincey, in his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, gives a graphic description of similar experiences. In Part III. *Pains of Opium*, he says of his dreams of lakes and expanse of water changing into a sea: "The sea appeared paved with innumerable faces, upturned to the heavens: faces imploring, wrathful, despairing; faces that surged upwards by thousands, by myriads, by generations; infinite was my agitation; my mind tossed, as it seemed, upon the billowy ocean, and weltered upon the weltering waves."

Lowell, who believed that Coleridge's opium habit was congenital, in warning us against making sermons on the frailties of great men, says:

"Our own are a far more profitable subject of contemplation. Let the man of imaginative temperament, who has never procrastinated, who has made all that was possible of his powers, cast the first stone."

Dr. Gillman always insisted that Coleridge's habit was not due to idleness or sensual indulgence. "No," he says, "it was a latent disease."

What a contrast we have here to Wordsworth's restfulness! It would be profitable to consider how much of the contrast presented in the nature of the two was due to physical basis. Wordsworth wrote: "My whole life I have lived in quiet thought."

Emerson, in a letter to Prof. Henry Reed, said of Wordsworth: "It is very easy to see that to act so powerfully in this practical age, with all his Oriental abstraction, he needed the indomitable vigor rooted in animal constitution."

ll. 51, 52.—

"His soul fared forth (as from the deep home-grove
The father-songster plies the hour-long quest)
To feed his soul-brood hungering in the nest;
But his warm Heart, the mother-bird, above

Their callow fledgling progeny still hove
 With tented roof of wings and fostering breast
 Till the Soul fed the soul-brood. Richly blest
 From Heaven their growth, whose food was Human Love."
 — Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

1804-1834.

PHANTOM.

First printed in 1834.

"Found in a Diary kept during the voyage to Malta." (Campbell.)

Before Coleridge reached home, Southey, who had just buried his firstborn at Bristol, came to Greta Hall to live. He had literary plans which must be executed, and on finding he could not live in Wales as he wished, Greta Hall was a natural resting place for him. He occupied one half of the house and the Coleridges the other, together with the Jacksons. The two families breakfasted in common in the room called *Paul*, and dined in another called *Peter*. Southey pleasantly dubbed the household *The Ant Hill*.

Sir George Beaumont had bought a small property at Applethwaite, a mile away, for Wordsworth, in order that he might be near Coleridge. Of this gift Wordsworth writes us a sonnet:

"Beaumont, it was thy wish that I should rear
 A seemly cottage in this sunny dell;
 On favoured ground, thy gift, where I might dwell
 In neighbourhood with one to me most dear,
 That undivided we from year to year
 Might work in our high calling — a bright hope
 To which our fancies, mingling, gave free scope
 Till checked by some necessities severe."

The "necessities severe" we have just seen in *The Pains of Sleep*. The damp climate of the Lakes increased his physical ailment, and in December, 1803, he was about to seek relief with Poole in London, when on the way he fell ill, and for nearly a month was cared for by Mrs. Wordsworth and Dorothy at Dove Cottage.

In a letter written to Mr. Richard Sharp immediately after his illness at Dove Cottage he reveals how pathetically the life there affected him. "I had only just strength enough to smile gratefully on my kind nurses, who tended me with a sister's and a mother's love, and often I know wept for me in their sleep and watched for me even in their dreams. O, dear sir, it does a man's heart good, I will not say to know such a family, but even to know there is such a family . . . it is the happiest family I ever saw. . . . Wordsworth is a poet, a most original one, and I feel myself a better poet in knowing how to honour *him*, than in all my own poetic compositions."

He arrived in London late in January, 1804, visited Davy, Godwin and Lamb, and wrote for the *Courier*. He planned more great works, as usual, all the time hoping to visit Malta for relief from his disease. For this visit Wordsworth loaned £100, and Sir George Beaumont gave the same amount. Mrs. Coleridge was provided for by the annuity of the Wedgewoods, £150. He sailed from Portsmouth in April with two other passengers, "a liverless half-pay lieutenant, and an unconscionably fat woman, who would have wanted elbow room in Salisbury Plain." In July he became private secretary to Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander John Ball, the governor, and one of Nelson's captains.

"This little dream-poem," says Mr. J. D. Campbell, "was found in a diary kept during the voyage to Malta."

1805—?

A SUNSET.

?

Malta was one of the most interesting political centres in Europe. First taken by Napoleon and then by the English, it was now held as the key to the East.

In August Coleridge became restless and visited Sicily, where he remained until November, when he returned to Malta.

Mr. J. D. Campbell says :

"These verses were found in a note-book dated Malta, Aug. 16, 1805, with the statement that they were written as 'non-sense verses,' merely to try a metre ; but they are by no means contemptible."

If we glance at the humble cot at Grasmere with its plain living and high thinking at this time, we find two feelings striving for utterance : gladness in the presence of the childlike of the infant daughter Dora, and sorrow at the tragic death of the beloved brother out of which grew the *Ode to Duty*, *To a Skylark*, *To the Daisy*, and the *Elegiac Stanzas* and *Character of the Happy Warrior*. In the midst of it all there was room for tender thoughts of Coleridge, as is seen in the sixth book of the *Prelude*, which was then being fashioned.

“ No absence scarcely can there be for those
Who love as we do ; speed thee well ! divide
With us thy pleasure ; thy returning strength,
Receive it daily as a joy of ours ;
Share with us thy fresh spirits, whether gift
Of gales Etesian or of tender thoughts.”

Before Coleridge left he had urged Wordsworth to work hard on the *Recluse* (to which the *Prelude* was a Portico). He said : “ I prophesy immortality to the *Recluse* as the first and finest philosophical poem, if it only be, as it undoubtedly will be, a faithful transcript of his own most august and innocent life, of his own habitual feelings, and modes of seeing and hearing.” While Coleridge is away, and after he had completed the *Prelude*, Wordsworth writes to Sir George Beaumont : “ Within this last month (Aug., 1805), I have returned to the *Recluse*, and have written 700 additional lines. Should Coleridge return, so that I might have some conversation with him on the subject, I should go on swimmingly.”

Wordsworth, in the closing book of the *Prelude*, which he dedicated to Coleridge, paid the following tribute to him and his influences:

“ With such a theme,
Coleridge ! with this my argument, of thee
Shall I be silent ? O capacious Soul !
Placed on this earth to love and understand,
And from thy presence shed the light of love,
Shall I be mute, ere thou be spoken of ?
Thy kindred influence to my heart of hearts
Did also find its way.”

1805-1829.

WHAT IS LIFE ?

First printed in the *Literary Souvenir*, 1829.

Soon Coleridge tires of his official life, gets homesick, and plans to return to England in May. On May Day he is almost broken-hearted to think he cannot go at once. On hearing of the death of John Wordsworth he 'kept his bed for a fortnight.' In *Anima Poetæ*, there is the following allusion to the last words of John Wordsworth: "'I have done my duty,' let her go." Coleridge says: "Let us do our *duty*! all else is a dream, life and death alike a dream." It is but natural that this poem should be the result of such experiences.

At this time Wordsworth is writing of him and of the high hope in their common endeavors:

"We shall still
Find solace — knowing what we have learnt to know,
Rich in true happiness if allowed to be
Faithful alike in forwarding a day
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work
(Should Providence such grace to us vouchsafe)
Of their deliverance surely yet to come.
Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
A lasting inspiration, sanctified
By reason, blest by faith: what we have loved,
Others will love, and we will teach them how."

Prelude, XIV.

1805 (?)—1828.

CONSTANCY TO AN IDEAL OBJECT.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1828.

The date of this poem cannot be accurately determined, but Mr. Campbell believes it was written in Malta.

This poem is full of the heart-sickness which became so intense during his absence at Malta, and is the prominent note in the poems of this period of unsettled mental and physical constitution. He has reached the height of his life, and he gets no glimpse of heights that are higher.

1805-1828.

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE TREE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1828.

Nothing definite is known of the origin and date of this poem, but Mr. J. D. Campbell places it in this year conjecturally.

It seems clear that there is much of autobiographic interest here which lies beneath the surface. Perhaps it is well that each reader must determine this for himself and thus gain in power to sympathize with the sufferer.

ll. 28-30. Cf. Allsop's Letters, 1864, p. 208.

Mr. Campbell gives the following note, —

l. 31. "In a letter (unpublished) written in 1819 to a young friend who was about to be married Coleridge wrote: 'O! that you could appreciate by the light of other men's experience' the anguish which prompted the ejaculation,

"Why was I made for love, yet love denied to me?"

or the state of suffering instanced by the following description :

"Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
Though tired in heart and limb;
He loved no other place, and yet
Home was no home to him."

(*v. Three Graves*, ll. 451-454.)

In a little poem, *Homeless*, written at this time, there is the same pathetic strain :

"O! Christmas Day, Oh! happy day,
A foretaste from above,
To him who hath a happy home,
And love returned from love."

1806-1833.

A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY A VIEW OF SADDLEBACK.

First printed in the *Amulet* for 1833.

Coleridge at last left Malta in September, 1805, for Naples, where he heard the news of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar. He

remained until January, 1806, when he went to Rome. Within a fortnight after his arrival at Rome the French entered Naples. While in the Imperial City he made many new acquaintances, Baron W. von Humboldt and Ludwig Tieck. Here too he won the friendship of the American painter, Washington Allston. It is to this friendship that we owe the best of all the portraits of the poet. The original of this is in the possession of Miss R. Charlotte Dana, Boston. His stay in Rome was cut short by an order for his arrest issued by Napoleon because of some of his articles years before in the *Morning Post*. He was assisted by friends — some say the Pope himself — and disguised he went to Leghorn, engaged passage on an American vessel (as a steward?) and set out for home, running the gauntlet of the French men-of-war. In forty-five days he arrived at Portsmouth, August 11, 1806.

Although Coleridge said that this poem was a “versified reflection,” and that it arose from gazing at three parallel *Forces*, on a moonlight night at the foot of Saddleback Fell, Mr. Campbell adds: “The ‘reflection’ was doubtless made at Saddleback Fell, but it was versified at Olevano, Tuscany, March 8, 1806.”

When they were chased by the French vessel, Coleridge threw his papers overboard, and thus we have no fruits of his labors in Rome.

1806–1893 ?

AD VILMUM AXIOLOGUM.¹

(William Wordsworth.)

There is no certain date for this little poem, but inasmuch as Coleridge wrote (in 1818 in *The Friend*, Sect. II., essay XI.) that he read to Humboldt in Rome Wordsworth’s *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, it is not impossible that it was suggested by that poem. That poem itself was not completed until this year, but Coleridge may have had a draft of it, as he surely had parts of the *Prelude* with him. It has, too, a natural connection with the poem which follows.

¹ Wordsworth’s first printed verses were signed with his name Latinized, ‘Axialogus.’

1807-1815.

TO A GENTLEMAN [William Wordsworth].

First printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1815, pub. 1817.

In a few days after landing Coleridge went to Lamb in London, even leaving friends to inform Mrs. Coleridge of his return. He began work at once on the *Courier*. Wordsworth knew that Coleridge 'dare not go home,' and he wrote him to come to the Lakes or to meet him in London. On the 16th of September Coleridge wrote his wife for the first time since his return saying that she might expect him at Greta Hall on the 29th. In the mean time Sir Humphry Davy had arranged for him to give a course of lectures at the Royal Institution. Of the next three months of his history we know only what can be gathered from the letters of his friends who were anxious that he should have an understanding with his wife. The Wordsworths had found Dove Cottage too small for their growing family, and had taken for the winter a farmhouse belonging to Sir George Beaumont at Coleorton, and were busy laying out the grounds for the new mansion, and so they wintered Coleridge there. Sara Hutchinson was with them. Hither Coleridge came with Hartley in December. Cf. *Memorials of Coleorton*, Knight. Early in January, 1807, Wordsworth recited to Coleridge the just completed autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*, with results revealed in this poem, which is more pathetic even than the *Ode to Dejection*, and need no comment to those who have followed his life thus far.

The many changes in the text have the same significance as those already noted in the *Ode to Dejection*, and for the same reason. The earliest form of the poem which he sent to the Beaumonts in 1807 is full of personalities of the warmest kind, but these were omitted in the version of 1817.

The main changes from first version are :

1. 1. First version has : —

“ O Friend ! O Teacher ! God’s great gift to me ! ”

ll. 61, 62. Instead of these, first version has : —

“ Dear shall it be to every human heart,
To me how more than dearest ! me, on whom
Comfort from thee, and utterance of thy love,

Came with such heights and depths of harmony,
 Such sense of wings uplifting, that its might
 Scatter'd and quell'd me, till my thoughts became
 A bodily tumult ; and thy faithful hopes,
 Thy hopes of me, dear Friend, by me, unfelt !
 Were troublous to me, almost as a voice,
 Familiar once, and more than musical ;
 As a dear woman's voice to one cast forth,
 A wanderer with a worn-out heart forlorn,
 Mid strangers pining with untended wounds.
 O Friend, too well thou know'st, of what sad years
 The long suppression had benumb'd my soul."

l. 83. For "Sage Bard," first version has "Friend."

l. 107. Between this and the following line first version has : —

(All whom I deepliest love — in one room all !)

"Coleorton Farmhouse contained at the time — besides Coleridge and his little son Hartley — Wordsworth, his wife and children, his sister Dorothy, and his sister-in-law Miss Sara Hutchinson. It was a cruel line ; for it excluded not merely his wife — from whom a formal separation had almost been arranged — but his children Derwent and Sara ; to say nothing of Thomas Poole." — J. D. Campbell.

1807 ?–1828.

A DAY DREAM.

First printed in the *Bijou*, 1828.

There is some doubt as to the date of this poem, but the atmosphere seems to be that of the days at Coleorton with the Wordsworths and Sara Hutchinson. If this be true, "Asra" is Sara Hutchinson, and "Mary" is Mrs. Wordsworth ; "our sister and our friend," William and Dorothy Wordsworth.

1807 ?–1817.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

First printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817.

Coleridge remained at Coleorton until the middle of February (1807), when he took Hartley to London, where he completed

arrangements for a course of lectures. In May they joined Mrs. Coleridge and the other children at Bristol, where they had been for several months. In June the family became the guests of Poole at Stowey.

Poole writes: "Hartley exactly like his father; Derwent, like him too, but stronger bodied, and with more of the common world in him; Sara, a sweet little animated fairy."

Naturally enough, these haunts called back those delightful days of 1797-98 only to intensify his wretchedness. Cf. *Thomas Poole and His Friends*, Vol. II. Chapter viii.

Mr. Campbell says: "The date of composition worked out by the 'eight springs' of the second stanza gives the summer (or later) of 1817, but Mr. Ernest Hartley Coleridge thinks the poem may have been written in 1803, regarding the 'sequel' as merely a 'figure of speech' more harmonious than six or nine or what not."

1809 ?-1809.

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

First printed in *The Friend*, 1809.

Through the good offices of Cottle, Coleridge came to know De Quincey, who had just completed his course at Oxford. He had been visiting Lamb, and in the fall of 1807 was in Somersetshire. Hearing that Coleridge had returned from abroad, he was anxious to meet him. The meeting took place at the house of a Mr. Chubb in Bridgwater, where the Coleridges were spending a few days. Interesting accounts of this meeting will be found in Cottle's *Reminiscences* and De Quincey's *Memoirs*. It is significant to note that while Coleridge knew nothing of the fact that De Quincey had begun the opium habit at Oxford, he warned him against a habit which had 'so overclouded his own life.' When, in October, Mrs. Coleridge returned to Greta Hall, De Quincey accompanied her and the children thither. On the way they spent several days with the Wordsworths at Dove Cottage, and De Quincey became interested in the house which later became his home. On returning to Bristol and finding Coleridge in straits he sent him through Cottle the handsome sum of £300. From September to November Coleridge was in Bristol visiting the family of Mr. Mor-

gan; he then went to London to arrange for his lectures, which he began early in the new year, 1808, and concluded in June. He then went to Bury St. Edmunds to visit the Clarksons, who had lived at Penrith while he was at Greta Hall, and were friends of his and the Wordsworths.

Thomas Clarkson's great work for the abolition of the slave trade had been crowned with success in 1807, and Wordsworth wrote: —

“ See, the palm
Is won, and by all nations shall be worn
The blood-stained enemy is forever torn;
And thou henceforth will have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness.”

Coleridge, too, had just reviewed for the *Edinburgh Review* Clarkson's work, “The History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.”

Mr. J. Dykes Campbell says: “It was no doubt owing to her (Mrs. Clarkson's) good influence that he at the time relinquished laudanum, or at least the abuse of it.”

The Wordsworths, about this time, were leaving Dove Cottage for a larger house at Allan Bank, just across the lake at the foot of Silve How, and De Quincey was about to become resident at Dove Cottage.

After visiting the Clarksons, Coleridge came to Allan Bank, and arranged to put Hartley and Derwent in school at Ambleside. Dorothy writes at this time: “Mr. Coleridge and his wife are separated, and I hope they will both be the happier for it. Coleridge intends to spend the winter with us.” During the winter (1808–9) he was busy on his new project, *The Friend*, a literary, moral and political weekly. The first number did not appear until June, and before the next June the project, like so many others, was abandoned. In the last few numbers there appeared what were called *Satyrans Letters*, written by himself; and in an issue, November 23, 1809, when the embers of his poetic genius were smouldering in their funeral urn, they momentarily beamed forth in this Epitaphium.

Coleridge said the poem was “imitated in the movements rather than the thought from the VIIth of Gli Epitafi of Chiabrera.”

Prof. Dowden says : " I like to remember Coleridge in connection with that memorial poem adapted from the Italian of Chiabrera, where he names himself Satyrane the idoloclast-idoloclast, because he hated the objects of vain worship of his own day : Satyrane, because, like the sylvan protector of Spenser's Una, he had a ' wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal.' "

1814-1817.

A PORTRAIT OF SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

First printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817, from *Remorse*.

After the failure of *The Friend* Coleridge visited the Montagus at Soho, but because of their unwise quoting of a word of advice, given them in regard to Coleridge by Wordsworth with the best of intentions, estrangement followed between the two poets on the one hand and between Coleridge and his host on the other, so that he went to visit Mr. John Morgan at Hammersmith, with whom he visited at Bristol in 1807 ; this visit was extended until 1816, and began a new era in the poet's career. (Cf. J. D. Campbell, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Chapter x. pp. 179, 180.)

Readers of these notes have become familiar with Cottle, Poole, and Lamb, and know what we owe to their devotion to Coleridge. It is fortunate that when he was away from these friends as well as from those at the Lakes — Wordsworth and Southey, — he should attract to him that young London barrister and book-lover, Henry Crabb Robinson, who knew more literary men in Europe than any one of his time. He met Wordsworth at Lamb's in 1808, and through him he was taught to esteem Coleridge. He was introduced to Coleridge at Lamb's in 1810, and from that day until the death of Mrs. Wordsworth in 1859, the *Diary and Correspondence* of Robinson becomes one of the richest sources of information in regard to the personal and literary history of these remarkable men.

Lamb wrote of Coleridge at this time : " He has powdered his head and looks like Bacchus."

In 1811 he became again attached to the *Courier* and gave another series of lectures on Shakespeare and Milton. The fragments of these now gathered from Mr. Robinson's diaries and the note-

books of J. P. Collier constitute one of the most remarkable books on English criticism ; from it Shakespearean criticism takes its rise.¹

The estrangement between Coleridge and Wordsworth continued ; and although Coleridge visited his children at Ambleside and his wife at Greta Hall, he made no effort to see Wordsworth, and he never visited the Lakes again. Early in 1812 the estrangement from Wordsworth was healed, and he delivered another course of lectures on the Drama. In the early fall he brought out his *Osorio* rewritten, under the title *Remorse*, and through the influence of Byron, who had now become a warm friend and patron, it was accepted at Drury Lane Theatre. He also gave a third course of lectures on Belles Lettres.

In this year the Wordsworths, who were then living at the Parsonage opposite the church, were in the depths of sorrow at the loss of two children, Catherine, aged four, and Thomas, six. Coleridge wrote most tenderly : " O that it were in my power to be with you myself instead of my letter. The Lectures I could give up ; but the rehearsal of my play commences this week, and upon it depends my best hopes of leaving town after Christmas, and living among you as long as I live. What comfort ought I not to afford, who have given you so much pain ? "

In January, 1813, the play was given with success at Drury Lane, and while Wordsworth was moving to Rydal Mount, Coleridge was planning for a course of lectures at Bristol. These were concluded in the spring of 1814.

He remained until November at Bristol (after the conclusion of the lectures), again trying to rid himself of the opium habit, and then went to Calne in Wiltshire, in care of a physician. At Bremhill, near by, was his old friend Bowles. At this time his friends, especially Sir George and Lady Beaumont, and Wordsworth, were devising means by which Hartley might enter Oxford. It was probably at this time that this poem was written as an appendix or note to l. 42, Act ii. Sc. ii. in *Remorse* : —

" You are a painter, one of many fancies !
You can call up ' past deeds and make them live '
On the blank canvas."

¹ *Lectures and Notes on Shakespeare and Other English Poets*, by S. T. Coleridge.

In a note to the second edition of *Remorse*, of these lines Coleridge says :

“ The following lines I have preserved in this place, not so much as explanatory of the picture of the assassination, as (if I may say so without disrespect to the Public) to gratify my own feelings, the passage being no mere *fancy* portrait ; but a slight, yet not unfaithful, profile of one, who still lives, *nobilitate felix, arte clarior vitâ colendissimus*.

1815-1817.

GLYCINE'S SONG, FROM ZAPOLYA, ACT II. SC. 2.

First printed in 1817.

The year 1815 finds Coleridge still at Calne, but in deep distress because of lack of funds and can raise them only by giving his MSS. as security. His MSS. of the *Biographia Literaria*, and the new edition of his poems, *Sibylline Leaves*, are ready for the printer. Hartley had been taken to Oxford by Wordsworth, and at the end of his Easter term visited his father. At the suggestion of Byron he wrote *Zapolya* (in which he borrowed from Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*), from which this and the following song is taken. They reveal the fact that he was able ‘to recapture this first fine careless rapture.’”

Mr. Stopford Brooke thinks they may have been written earlier and introduced into the Drama at this time.

1815-1817.

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY.

First printed in *Sibylline Leaves*, 1817.

Readers of this characteristic little poem have been misled by Coleridge's note, “ A Schoolboy Poem.” Against taking such expressions of Coleridge literally, Mr. J. D. Campbell warns us and says : “ These lines may embody some schoolboy dream of holidays and his Sister Ann ; it may even have received some shape in boyhood, but not its present shape — that must have been impressed at a later date — 1815-1817, when *Sib. Leaves* was in press.”

There is a fine prophecy here of the two main activities of the coming century — Science and Poetry. Tennyson's *Parnassus* should be read as expressing a similar truth a century later. In

this notion of the sister we have an idea which was fundamental with Wordsworth, as in *We Are Seven* and *Intimations of Immortality*. Mr. Stopford Brooke calls it Coleridge's "Metaphysic of fairyland."

Prof. Hugo Munsterberg, of Harvard University, in a recent lecture on Child Psychology, said: "We must be positivists in science and psychology, but we must not forget that science and psychology are themselves merely tools for the free will of a *real personality which idealists alone understand*."

1817?-1834.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

The year 1816 marks the last of the changes in Coleridge's troubled life in the matter of environment, for in March he leaves Calne for London, taking with him the MS. of *Zapolya*. He consulted an eminent physician, Dr. Adams, in regard to his condition, and through him gained admission at Dr. Gillman's, Highgate Hill. This proved to be the last turn in the tortuous journey of his life. In April, 1816, Dr. Joseph Adams, to whom Coleridge had made his case known, wrote to Dr. Gillman of Highgate asking if it would be possible for him to take Coleridge, saying: "He wishes to fix himself in the hands of some medical gentleman who will have courage to refuse him any laudanum. . . . He is desirous of retirement and a garden. I should not have proposed it but on account of the great importance of the character as a literary man." Gillman had seen Coleridge but once. Soon after Dr. Adams' letter was received Coleridge called, and influenced him to accept the proposition. "Coleridge came," says Gillman, "bringing in his hands the proofsheets of *Christabel*."

Hardly adequate recognition has been given to this noble family for the haven of rest furnished this storm-tossed mariner. Everything was done to make his life comfortable and happy. An addition was built to the house in order that he might have ample room for his chests and books. Friends were welcome, and sympathy was shown in these autumn days of thought and song. Providence, so kind to Coleridge in raising up friends, was never richer in gifts than in these last provisions for his vesper song. "From his

ninth year he had been a wanderer and a sojourner, finding no city to dwell in, and now when he was at his wit's end, tossed in a sea of troubles, the waves suddenly stilled, and he felt that he had reached his desired haven."

Mr. Ernest Coleridge says :

"To the Gillmans he owed the 'crown of his cup and garnish of his dish,' a welcome which lasted till the day of his death. . . . Their patience must have been inexhaustible, their loyalty unimpeachable, their love indestructible. Such friendship is rare and beautiful, and merits a most honorable remembrance."

Lamb writes : "Coleridge is absent but four miles, and the neighborhood of such a man is as exciting as the presence of fifty ordinary persons." *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *The Pains of Sleep* were published in pamphlet in June, and provoked bitter controversy. Coleridge was disturbed because of the article in the *Edinburgh Review*, which was written by Hazlitt, for whom he had done so much.

Early in 1817 the *Biographia Literaria* and second *Lay Sermon* were published. (The *Blackwood's* review of the *Biographia* was very bitter.) He renewed his work on the *Courier*. *Zapolya* was published, and two thousand copies were immediately sold. Wordsworth visited him, and interested himself in the new course of lectures on poetical literature which was being planned. In this year, too, he first met Dr. J. H. Green, who became one of his most devoted disciples and after his death his sole literary executor.

The date of this poem is uncertain, but it must have been written prior to the publication of *Ivanhoe*, 1820, for Scott quoted ll. 9-11 from it. He says, "To borrow lines from a contemporary poet, who has written but too little."

Mr. Campbell quotes from Gillman's *Life of Coleridge* : "The lines were composed as an experiment for a metre, and repeated by the author to a mutual friend, who repeated them again at a dinner-party to Scott on the following day."

1819-1819.

FANCY IN NUBIBUS.

First printed in *Blackwood's Magazine*, November, 1819.

Early in 1818 the lectures were given in a hall at Flower-de-Luce Court, Fetter Lane, and unfortunately Hazlitt was lecturing at

the same time on Poetry at the Surrey Institution. Through these lectures Coleridge made the acquaintance of Thomas Allsop, whose sympathy and admiration came to mean much to him at a time when some of the older relationships were becoming severely strained. With him he conferred in regard to a double course of lectures on Shakespeare and Philosophy respectively. When Coleridge sent a ticket to Lamb he replied: "We are sorry it never lies in your way to come to us, but dear Mahomet we will come to you." He was in such financial straits in spite of the funds from the lectures that he consented to be a contributor to *Blackwood's Magazine*, which had been so severe on the *Biographia*. This sonnet was the first of his contributions to that magazine.

Here we have that brightness of spirit, lightness of touch, and melody of voice which were common to him only when at his best. It is not thought turned into poetry, but spontaneous poetic thought, born of the pure imagination, the rarest and most precious of the gifts of the muse. It might have been written by Keats, who this very year was on the heights of his poetic mount of vision.

Cf. Keats: "I stood tiptoe on a little hill."

Such work as this reveals to us the truth of what Wordsworth said of his friend, *Prelude*, II. 215 *et seq.*

"No officious slave
Art thou of that false secondary power
By which we multiply distinctions, then
Deem that our puny boundaries are things
That we perceive, and not that we have made.
To thee, unblinded by these formal arts,
The unity of all hath been revealed."

In the Tauchnitz edition of Coleridge's Poems, F. Freiligrath says that the last five lines of this poem belong to Stolberg's *An das Meer*.

1820?—1836.

TO NATURE.

First printed by Allsop (*Letters*, etc., 1836).

In April, 1819, Coleridge met Keats, who had just finished the first draft of *Endymion*, and Leigh Hunt in Highgate Lane. "We

walked together 'for near two miles,' says Keats, 'and in those two miles he broached a thousand things.' On shaking hands at parting Coleridge turned to Hunt and said aside, "There is death in that hand." Cf. *Table Talk*, April 14, 1832. This was a remarkable prevision not shared by many of Keats's immediate friends. Later Coleridge alluded to the two-forked Parnassus, Hampstead and Highgate.

Early in 1820 Hartley and Derwent visited him, and he writes, "Would to Heaven their dear sister were with us, — the cup of paternal joy would be full to the brim." He had not seen her since 1813. Later he was called to drink a very bitter cup in the matter of Hartley's loss of his Fellowship at Oriel because of intemperance. The thought that his son had inherited a weakness from him was hard to bear.

This sonnet reveals a Wordsworthian love of the joy and beauty of the universe, and disposition to seek relief in them. The date of composition is uncertain, but Mr. J. D. Campbell places it here, "c. 1820." Compare lines 6-10 with Wordsworth's the *Prelude*, II. 319 *et seq.*:

"If this be sorrow," etc.

Mr. Campbell says: "Along with this poem in Allsop's *Letters* is another, *Farewell to Love*. Of *To Nature* he says: 'The second sonnet I have found on a detached piece of paper, without note or observation. How it came into my possession I have now forgotten, tho' I have some faint impression that I wrote it down from dictation.'"

1823-1828.

YOUTH AND AGE.

First printed in the *Bijou* and *The Literary Souvenir*, 1828.

In 1821 he was still "scribbling for *Blackwood's Magazine*," and building castles-in the air in the shape of a monumental work on the *History of Philosophy in France and England since the Restoration*. He spent two months at Ramsgate with the Gillmans, and met there the Cowden Clarkes. They knew he was in town by a remark of a friend who said "I heard an elderly gentleman in a public library, who looked like a Dissenting Minister, talk as I had never heard man talk."

With the new year, 1822, he planned to enlarge his 'school' of young men who had come to him to learn philosophy and literature. Not the least noted of these men was the Scotch preacher Edward Irving. It is of this work of Coleridge of which Carlyle speaks in his life of Sterling.

The picture is exceedingly graphic: "Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill, in those years, looking down on London and its smoke-tumult, like a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle; attracting towards him the thoughts of innumerable brave souls still engaged there. . . . He had, especially among young inquiring men, a higher than literary, a kind of prophetic or magician character. . . . No talk in his century, or in any other, could be more inspiring."

He announces to Allsop a work on Logic, the MSS. of which, Mr. J. D. Campbell tells us, are now in the possession of Mr. C. A. Ward, of Chingford Hatch. At Christmas Mrs. Coleridge and Sara came to Highgate and remained for two months. They then visited their relatives at Ottery St. Mary, where Henry Nelson Coleridge, the son of James Coleridge, fell in love with his cousin Sara; this was reciprocated, and all parties were pleased with the prospects. For a picture of Sara Coleridge, Edith Southey and Dora Wordsworth, see *The Triad* by Wordsworth. Coleridge seems to have been the observed of all observers with a choice fraternity at this time, for Lamb writes: "I dined in Parnassus with Wordsworth, Coleridge, Rogers, Tom Moore. . . . Coleridge was in his finest vein of talk — had all the talk."

Cottle says: "Inveterate talkers, while Mr. Coleridge was on the wing, generally suspended their own flight, and felt it almost a profanation to interrupt so impressive and mellifluous a speaker. . . . This singular, if not happy, peculiarity, occasioned Madame de Stael to remark of Mr. C., that 'He is rich in Monologue, but poor in Dialogue.' " (*Reminiscences*).

The most important event in 1823 is the creation of the first draft of this exquisite poem, one of the finest flowers in his poetic garden. In it the poet reveals his consciousness that

"It is not now as it hath been of yore."

1824-1834.

LOVE'S FIRST HOPE.

First printed among Miscellaneous Poems in *Poetical Works*, 1834, with the title *First Advent of Love*.

Two years had passed since the advent of the Scotch preacher Edward Irving, and now through this devoted disciple the Scotch Thersites, Thomas Carlyle, was conducted to the 'Dodona oracle' at Highgate. Carlyle was fresh from his study of Goethe, and in an ultra critical, even dyspeptic mood, so, instead of sympathy with Coleridge, we get only sneers at his idealism and disgust at his physical weakness. In such a mood we are not surprised that he found nothing to venerate in him. He says, "Several times Montagu, on Coleridge's 'Thursday Evenings,' carried Irving and me out, and returned blessing Heaven (I not) for what he had received. . . . I reckon him a man of great and useless genius, a strange, not at all a great man."

Carlyle's dyspepsia colors life differently from Coleridge's opium. He was not less callous to the sweetness of Lamb, for he says: "There was much talk and loud of Charles Lamb, at his own house I saw him once; once I gradually felt to have been enough for me."

Coleridge was now putting the final touches upon the *Aids to Reflection* when Irving dedicated to him one of his sermons. Lamb wrote of Irving: "He is a humble disciple at the foot of Gamaliel S. T. C."

Coleridge assigned an earlier date for this poem, saying it was a relic of his schoolboy muse, but Mr. Campbell settles beyond a doubt that it was written in 1824. He says that a memorandum in Coleridge's handwriting (1824) on the fourth and fifth lines is as follows: "A pretty unintended couplet in the prose of Sidney's *Arcadia*."

The passage in the *Arcadia* is as follows: "Her breath is more sweet than a gentle southwest wind, which comes creeping over flowery fields and shadowed waters in the heat of summer."

Cf. Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act i. Sc. 1.

"O, it came o'er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour."

While it is not certain at what time this poem was written, it has all the characteristics of Coleridge's best work, every line of which breathes the spirit of the new Romance.

1826-1828.

DUTY SURVIVING SELF LOVE.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1828.

The only other event of 1825 which interests us was his appointment to the Royal Society of Literature, which brought with it an annuity of one hundred guineas from the king's privy purse. For this he was charged by Hazlitt, in *Spirit of the Age*, with having 'turned to the unclean side'; to which he replied in the best of humour — in a poem called *A Character*.

In 1826 he was much with the Lambs, and continued his now famous Thursday Evening symposia. It would seem that the joy now coming to him from the 'divine philosophy' which to so many he had made as 'musical as is Apollo's lute' found expression in this poem.

1827-1828.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE.

First printed in the *Bijou*, 1828.

Mr. J. Dykes Campbell thinks that there had been some estrangement between the poet and his nephew, Henry Nelson Coleridge, as there is an interruption of *Table Talk* (edited by H. N. C.) between 1824 and 1827. This was, however, removed by the visit of Sara to Highgate in this year, 1827. At this time, too, attempts were being made to secure for him a sinecure office, but they failed. He had made a warm place for himself in the hearts of his hosts, for when Sara Coleridge, after her marriage, suggested that her father should come and live with her, Mr. and Mrs. Gillman said that it would be impossible for them to let him go; wherever he went, they would have to go too; they could not be separated from him.

This poem as first printed was followed by the words, "Lines composed on a day in February." In 1828 they were changed to "Lines composed on the 21st February, 1827."

Like many another of his later poems this has the subdued color of autumn, as parts of Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*. While the evening of his poetic career was lighted up with glints of extraordinary splendor and beauty, the contrast to what he had seen was so strong that he could not say with Wordsworth — on a similar occasion —

“ Thence welcome, above all, the Guest
Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
Seem to recall the Deity
Of youth into the breast.”

1828—1865.

AND OFT I SAW HIM STRAY.

First published in *Beaten Paths*, 1865.

In the fall of 1827 Coleridge voiced his delight at the engagement of Derwent to Miss Mary Pridham, in a little poem full of hope, yet having one line of intense pathos :

“ Hope making a new start,
Since I have heard with most believing heart,
That all this shaping heart has yearned to see,
My Derwent hath found realized in thee.”

Mr. Yarnell says that on one occasion when Derwent Coleridge entertained some American friends, “ he placed his hands on either side of the head of his daughter Christabel, then about eight years old, and said, ‘ This is the best representative of S. T. C. I can show you.’ ” — *Wordsworth and the Coleridges*.

Early in 1828 Coleridge met Scott at a dinner party when, according to Lockhart, he talked on the origin of the *Iliad*, anticipating the doctrine of the German — Wolf — that it was a collection of poems by different authors. In June he accompanied Wordsworth and his daughter Dora on a visit to the Rhine. A record of a portion of this tour is to be found in *Beaten Paths*, by T. Colly Grattan, who then lived in Brussels. Mr. Grattan acted as guide to Waterloo and other places. He describes a walk by night with Coleridge about Namur : “ He took me by the arm, and in his low, recitative way he rehearsed two or three times,

and finally recited, some lines which he said I had recalled to his mind, and which formed part of something never published. He repeated the lines at my request, and as well as I could catch the broken sentences, I wrote them down immediately afterwards with my pencil." Such is the history of this little fragment (Campbell). Are these lines a description of his friend Wordsworth? They bear a striking resemblance to lines 55-58 of Wordsworth's *Stanzas written in my Pocket-copy of Thomson's Castle of Indolence*, 1802:

'Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried;
Long blades of grass plucked round him as he lay,
Made, to his ear attentively applied,
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play.'

1828-1829.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

First printed in the *Keepsake*, 1829, where it accompanied a drawing by Stothard.

The band of disciples to be met on Coleridge's 'Thursdays' was now increased by that interesting young enthusiast, John Sterling, just from Cambridge. In association with his tutor, J. C. Hare, and his friend, F. D. Maurice, he had become devoted to the philosophy of the *Biographia* and the *Aids to Reflection*, so it was but natural that he should drift to the Sage of Highgate. Cf. *Essays and Tales*, by John Sterling, with a memoir by J. C. Hare, and *Life of John Sterling*, by T. Carlyle.

It was in this year that his genius again burst forth in wild luxuriance at the remembrance of love and beauty which had been his in youth. On seeing Stothard's engraving of the *Garden of Boccaccio* he loses himself in recreating a joyous idyl of the past.

?—1830.

LOVE, HOPE AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION.

First printed in the *Keepsake* for 1830.

One of the most interesting events in this year was the recognition which Coleridge received at the hands of Carlyle. In his essay on

Novalis in the *Foreign Review* Carlyle said of Coleridge's works : " Among readers they have still but an unseen circulation ; like living brooks, hidden for the present under mountains of froth and theatrical snow-paper, and which only at a distant day, when these mountains shall have decomposed themselves into gas and earthly residuum, may roll forth in their true limpid shape to gladden the general eye with what beauty and everlasting freshness does reside in them."

Sir Humphry Davy, whom Coleridge considered almost as great a poet as naturalist, passed away, and we find allusions in Lamb's letters at this time which show that Coleridge himself was in failing health.

In September his daughter Sara was married to her cousin, Henry Nelson Coleridge, in the ancient church of St. Kentigern, Crosthwaite, Keswick. They settled at Hampstead, and *Table Talk* was continued early the following year.

It is not unnatural at a time when he was living so much in the past, when sere leaves were on the bough or falling, that he should touch upon the nature and training of children. In this exquisite little poem there is food for thought for all who would sun themselves in the light of children's happy faces.

"Is it not strange," he asks in *Table Talk*, July 10, 1834, just before his death, "that very recently bygone images and scenes of early life have stolen into my mind like breezes blown from the spice-islands of Youth and Hope — these two realities of the phantom world !"

The original title of the poem was *The Poet's Answer to a Lady's Question respecting the Accomplishments most desirable in an Instructress of Children*.

1829-1829.

LINES WRITTEN IN COMMONPLACE BOOK OF MISS
BARLOW.

First printed in the *New York Mirror*, Dec. 19, 1829.

This little poem is self-explanatory. It is full of the highest and noblest sentiments which need to be emphasized in these early years of the new century. The history of the poem is interesting. Mr. Charles Dudley Warner procured for Mr. Campbell a copy

from the venerable lady to whom it was addressed, Mrs. Collins, of Baltimore, and he had it printed in the *Athenæum*, May 3, 1884. Hence it appeared in his edition of the poet's works, 1893.

In *Table Talk*, April, 1833, he says: "The possible destiny of the United States of America — as a nation of a hundred millions of freemen — stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred, and speaking the language of Shakespeare and Milton, is an august conception. Why should we not wish to see it realized? America would then be England viewed through a solar microscope; Great Britain in a state of glorious magnification."

1830?—1834?

PHANTOM OR FACT.

First printed in edition of 1834.

During this year Coleridge published a second edition of his *Constitution of Church and State*, and in a letter sent to his old friend Poole he speaks of his extrication 'from the Body of this Death,' and the illness which brought him to the 'brink of the grave.' Mrs. Sandford says, "Across the letter just below the date is written: 'Chap. v. and from p. 143 to p. 183 will, I flatter myself, interest you. — S. T. C.'"

This reference is to that fine passage which expresses Coleridge's appreciation of his friend, and also contains an exquisite portrait of the noble man. Mrs. Sandford concludes her interesting *Thomas Poole and his Friends* as follows:

"And who so fit to pen Tom Poole's epitaph as the friend whom he loved above all others, and whose friendship was the chief treasure, as it was the most remarkable experience of his life."

Under such conditions of reflection was this poem evidently written.

This picture of the poet's spiritual youth returning from heaven, and at the same time not recognizing its former dwelling-place, is full of the most piteous pathos yet imagined; it is a bit of darkness from the depths of his soul. It is full of the mystery of Hamlet's riddling speeches.

It was in 1830 that a new claimant for the companionship of the Muse came forward. Alfred Tennyson published his first volume, *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*. While Leigh Hunt and Arthur

Hallam praised these poems highly, Coleridge wrote, *Table Talk*, April 24, 1833: "I think there are some things of a good deal of beauty in what I have seen; the misfortune is that he began to write verses without very well understanding what metre is."

One can imagine that the creator of such marvellous melodies as *The Ancient Mariner*, *Kubla Khan*, and *Christabel* would not let a new candidate for the cathedral choir pass without a rigid test. With regard to this judgment by the elder poet, it is interesting to read what Tennyson said in 1890: "From what I have heard he may have read *Glen-river*, in 'above the loud Glenriver,' and *tendriltwine* in the line, 'Mantled with flowing tendriltwine' dactylically; because I had an absurd antipathy to hyphens, and put two words together as one word. If that was the case, he might well have wished that I had more sense of metre."

Wordsworth, when visiting Cambridge in 1830, wrote: "We have a respectable show of blossom in poetry — two brothers of the name of Tennyson, one in particular not a little promising."

Arthur Hallam, after visiting Coleridge at Highgate, in this year 1830, wrote:

"Methought I saw a face whose every line
Wore the pale cast of thought, a good old man
Most eloquent, who spoke of things divine.
Around him youths were gathered, who did scan
His countenance so grand, and drank
The sweet sad tears of wisdom."

1833-1834.

LOVE'S APPARITION AND EVANISHMENT.

First printed in *Friendship's Offering*, 1834, without the *Envoy*. This was added in 1852.

At the death of George IV. the honorarium which Coleridge had received as one of the Royal Associates ceased, but through the efforts of friends a sum of £300 was granted from the Treasury. There never had been any danger of his suffering want, as those who loved him stood ready to assist him, and there is no more interesting or suggestive chapter in the history of English literature than that which reveals how princely merchants did honor to themselves while ministering to the needs of Coleridge.

Much of the time after 1830 he was confined to the sick-chamber. Wordsworth left his retirement at Rydal in November, 1830, and rode Dora's pony to Cambridge, in order that she might have it to ride while visiting her uncle, the Master of Trinity. On his way home he visited London to see Coleridge, and in January, 1831, he writes of him to Sir William Hamilton: "It grieves me to say that his constitution seems breaking up. . . . His mind has lost none of its vigor." Again, alluding to the fact that Sir William is not likely now to see Coleridge, he says: "Much do I regret this, for you may pass your life without meeting a man of such commanding faculties."

In 1832 Lamb writes: "I will set out on Wednesday morning to take you by the hand. . . . Mary's most kind love. . . . Here she is crying for mere love over your letter. I wrung out less, but not sincerer showers."

There was visiting Henry Crabb Robinson at this time a young Englishman of great promise, Walter Savage Landor. He had not been in England for eighteen years, and Robinson naturally took him to see his friends, Lamb, Flaxman, Hare, Coleridge, and others. Had Coleridge been in health one could easily imagine the high discourse which would have passed between the two Platonists. As it was, Landor was disappointed because Coleridge talked only of himself.

In 1833 he recovered sufficiently to visit Cambridge for the meeting of the British Association. Of these days he wrote: "I have not passed, of late years at least, three days of such great enjoyment and healthful excitement of mind and body." He stayed with Thirlwall at Trinity, of whom, with Faraday, he spoke most admiringly.

In the autobiography of Harriet Martineau we find a description of the Coleridge of these days: "He looked very old with his rounded shoulders and drooping head. . . . His eyes were as wonderful as they were ever represented to be, light grey, extremely prominent, and actually glittering. . . . I am glad to have seen his weird face and heard his dreamy voice; and my notion of possession, prophecy — of involuntary speech from involuntary brain action, has been clearer since."

It was under such conditions, when physical weakness seemed momentarily to overcome him, that this poem, so full of the

thought of what had been his, was written. This sentiment of 'L'Envoy' is found in *Table Talk*, June of this year : where, speaking of Faraday, he says in true Wordsworthian tone : "To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood ; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar ; this characterizes the mind that feels the riddle of the world, and may help to unravel it."

The *Envoy* was composed in 1824, as Coleridge says, 'without taking pen off paper, and was quoted in a letter to Allsop, April 27, 1824, as follows, —

"Idly we supplicate the Powers above :
There is no resurrection for a Love
That unperturb'd, unshadow'd, wanes away,
In the chill'd heart by inward self-decay.
Poor mimic of the Past ! the love is o'er
That must *resolve* to do what did itself of yore."

1833-1834.

EPITAPH.

First printed in *Poetical Works*, 1834.

In August of this year (1833) Emerson had just reached London from the Continent, inspired with the desire "to see the faces of three or four writers," — Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, and Carlyle. He sought Coleridge at Highgate. Coleridge's conversation was mostly on Allston and Channing, exceedingly appreciative of the former but somewhat stormy toward the latter. And as if to impress Emerson with the true creed he recited the sonnet, *My Baptismal Birthday*, just written, the last eight lines of which are interesting as revealing his calm and child-like faith :

"The heir of heaven, henceforth I fear not death ;
In Christ I live ! in Christ I draw the breath
Of the true life ! Let then Earth, Sea and Sky
Make war against me ! On my front I show
Their mighty Master's seal. In vain they try
To end my life, that can but end its woe. —

Is that a deathbed where a Christian lies? —

Yes! but not his — 't is Death itself there dies."

This was prophetic of the death he was to die, and he was loyal to the creed. In the winter he wrote this Epitaph, in which the heart of a little child still beats in the breast of the Sage. He had fought a good fight, for it was literally death in life to battle with the foul fiend Opium; he had laid the monster low at his feet, and thereafter lived in the ampler ether and diviner air of intellectual and moral excellence. This is the lesson from Coleridge's life that should be made prominent: he raised himself above himself and became a peer in God's realm.

This poem should be compared with that of Landor written under similar conditions.

"I strove with none, for none was worth my strife:

Nature I loved, and next to nature, Art;

I warmed both hands before the fire of life;

It sinks, and I am ready to depart."

Coleridge died on the morning of July 25, 1834, and was buried in Highgate Churchyard, where now stands the simple memorial bearing this inscription.

Washington Allston on his deathbed said: "Coleridge was the greatest man I ever knew, and more sinned against than sinning."

Scott had died in 1832, and Lamb, never recovering from the shock at the loss of Coleridge, "that great and dear spirit," died in December of the same year; and before the close of 1835, Crabbe, Hogg, and Mrs. Hemans had passed on. Wordsworth was so deeply moved by the loss of so many of his associates that he gave voice to his grief in the poems *On the Death of Charles Lamb* and *Elegy on the Death of James Hogg*. In the latter he speaks of his dearest friends thus:

"The Mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,

'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies;

And death upon the braes of Yarrow

Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes:

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,

From sign to sign, its steadfast course,

Since every mortal power of Coleridge
Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth :
And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
Has vanished from his lonely hearth.

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast has brother followed brother,
From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
Were earlier raised, remain to hear
A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
' Who next will drop and disappear ? ' "

The following from Coleridge's Preface to the second edition of his poems reveals what was fundamental with him through life.

" I expect neither profit nor general fame by my writings ; and I consider myself as having been amply repayed without either. Poetry has been to me its own ' exceeding great reward ' : it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments ; it has endeared solitude ; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the Good and the Beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me. "

Of the three remarkable children of Coleridge only a word can be said here, but their life work should not be neglected by the student of these poems.

Of Hartley's wonderful gifts of intellect in his Oxford period Alexander Dyce says : " He knew that he was expected to talk, and talking was his delight. Leaning his head on one shoulder, turning up his dark bright eyes, and swinging backward and forward on his chair, he would hold forth by the hour (for no one wished to interrupt him) on whatever subject might have been started, — either of literature, politics or religion, — with an originality of thought, a force of illustration, and a facility and beauty of expression which I question if any man then living, except his father, could have surpassed. "

Mr. Aubrey de Vere writes of Sara Coleridge as follows : " Of her some one has said, Her father had looked down into her eyes, and left in them the light of his own ; when Sir Henry Taylor saw her first, as she entered Southey's study at Keswick, she seemed to him, as he told me, a form of compacted light, not of flesh and blood, so radiant was her hair, so slender her form, so buoyant her step and heaven-like her eyes."

Of Derwent Coleridge as Principal of St. Mark's College, Chelsea, Mr. Ellis Yarnell says : " Derwent Coleridge had something of his father's power of continuous and most impressive discourse on questions of high import. I listened again and again to deliverances which were revelations to me. I would have fain made record at once of what seemed to me expressions of subtle and ingenious thought. Alas ! the effort was beyond me."

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